Chronicles

July 1995

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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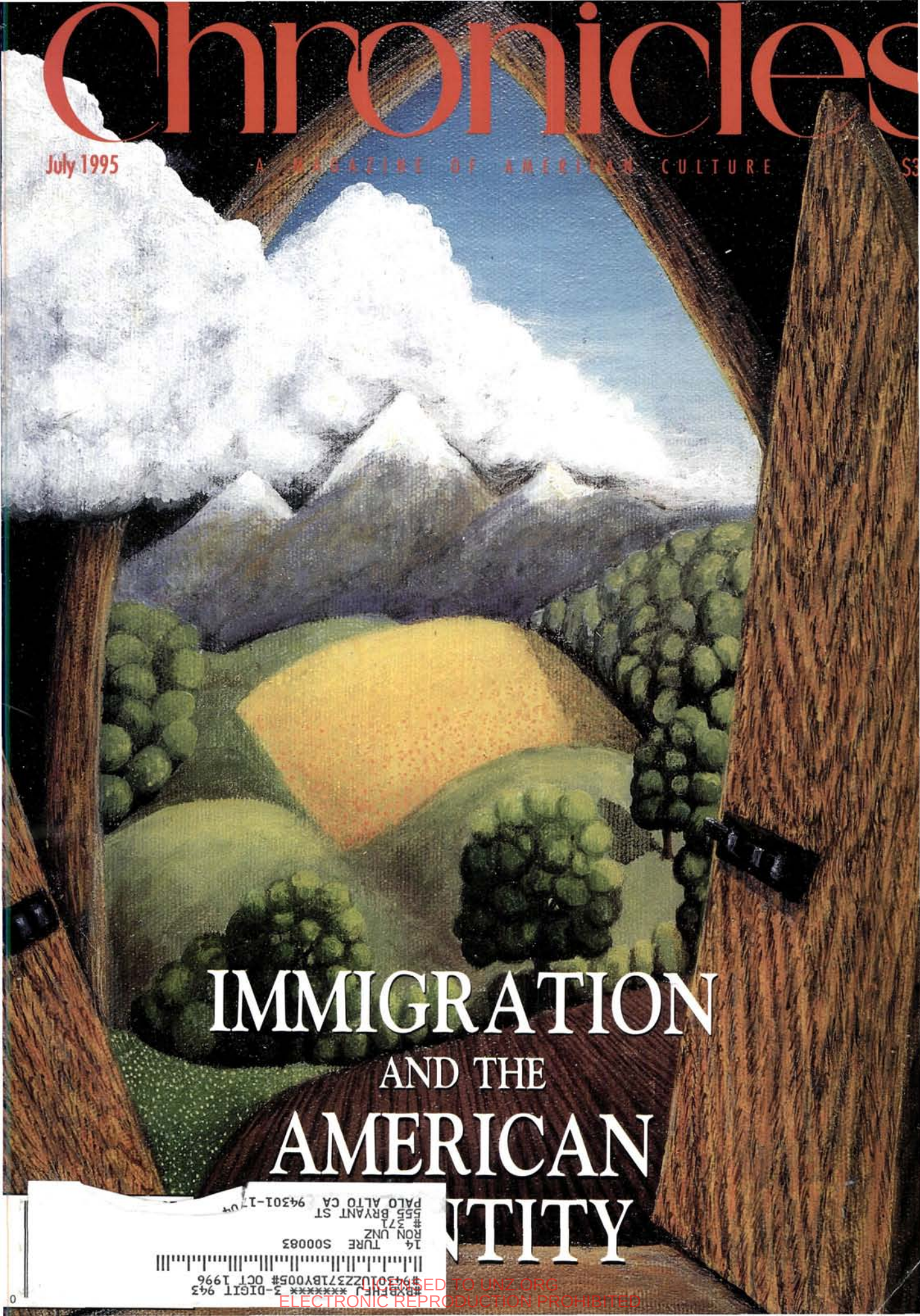

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Chronicles

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Jury Rigging

Christopher Baldwin's description of his time spent on jury duty ("Jury Rigging," March 1995) was spellbinding. What he witnessed behind the closed doors of the jury room is exactly what your fine magazine has been pointing out repeatedly: it's not the judges, lawyers, congressmen, and the media that are causing our country to become a moral wasteland, although they indeed play a part. It is the moral vacuum that exists in the soul of the average American. And until that changes, the soul of the nation cannot change.

—Brent Baldwin
Lebanon, TN

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE APRIL BOMBING in Oklahoma City told us a lot about ourselves and how we respond to adversity. When a bomb destroyed the federal building in that city, politicians and journalists were swift to place the atrocity in some kind of wider context, offering interpretations which ranged from the accurate to the vulgar. In the latter category, we have the "loss of innocence" that has so regularly been announced in American history, from the Great Depression through the years of Vietnam and Watergate. The bomb attack also marked perhaps the hundredth occasion in recent decades on which it was soberly declared that "Terrorism has now come to the United States." Official interpretations were less informative than the numerous unspoken or unheralded messages, which proved yet again the gross inferiority of the mass media to the public they claim to serve. Few remarked on the continuing religiosity of the American people and their resort to religious institutions at a time of apparent crisis. This outburst of faith is astonishingly different from what might have been expected in comparable circumstances in any nation of Europe or the Pacific Rim. Reactions to the bombing also presented a picture of a surprisingly united American nation, despite all the intercommunal strains of recent years.

While these are values in which conservatives might take comfort, other messages were far more troubling. After an atrocity of this sort, the quest for culprits inevitably taints not just the actual offenders, but any who might be thought to sympathize with them, and the naming of "accomplices" illustrates much about prevailing social prejudices. In the immediate aftermath of the bombing, Arabs and Muslims seemed destined for persecution, but the investigation's subsequent focus on the radical right drew attention to a wholly different cast of villains. With dazzling speed, the media in the days following the first charges had placed the bombers in a context of "hate groups," a term which (it now appeared) was synonymous with "armed citizen militias," "tax protesters," "survivalists," and the perennially popular "gun nuts." "White supremacist" was another handy if inaccurate collective phrase for the assorted dissidents. The implications deserve serious thought. While I find quite ludicrous the image of myself donning fatigues or carrying an assault rifle in a war game in some Midwestern forest, I respect the opinions of those who believe that the United States was founded on the basis of an armed citizenry, to be supplemented by regular forces in time of need. These individuals logically support the fundamental right to bear arms for self-defense, and not merely for "sporting" purposes. While disagreeing with them, I recognize that others have principled objections both to the constitutionality of our present tax system and to the purposes for which the proceeds are used. Others still exercise what they take to be a literally God-given right to live in remote settings where they can pursue their own values free from the demands of a tainted and probably doomed society. All, I now find, are "white supremacists," "hate groups," a collective public enemy number one, and the urgent official priority is to remove the weapons with which they seek to terrorize "legitimate" society, and perhaps to limit the insidious propaganda with which such goals are pursued. After Oklahoma City, the right to dissent from

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many social orthodoxies could be severely circumscribed.

Pace the *New York Times* and CBS, one does not have to be a right-wing radical to be deeply alarmed at the directions taken by federal law enforcement agencies in the last two decades, mostly under conservative Republican administrations. These trends include the growth of national policing in the guise of "interjurisdictional task forces"; the popular glamorization of informers and traitors; the seizure of property from anyone linked however tenuously to narcotics, generally without a hint of due process; and the increasingly militarized nature of search-and-seizure operations. All, however, are accepted and even lauded because they are directed explicitly against the indefensible—drug dealers, cultists, child molesters, and, henceforward, citizen militias and survivalists irrevocably tainted by a terrorist attack which they did not commit and probably condemned.

What we have witnessed in recent months is a masterly illustration of the power of semantics as a weapon of political control. If a group of quirky religious zealots chooses to live apart, it is a "cult," and Waco taught us (or so we usually think) that cults are violent groups which might direct their homicidal tendencies either outwardly or against themselves. In either case, the death of some or all of the "cultists"/"survivalists" is an inevitable and even desirable consequence of their own warped ideology: the more deaths, the more evidence of their fanaticism. In the future, the ritual invocation of Oklahoma City will provide a sanction for virtually any law-enforcement action against any group who can be stigmatized with the various hate/supremacist labels. Moreover, people who feel not the slightest sympathy for worldviews based on racial hatred or supremacy should be aware that the definitions have now shifted substantially, and that zeal for the rights of gun owners places one under suspicion. So, probably, does the "paranoid" suspicion of pervasive corruption within the federal government, the deranged belief that murky secrets remain to emerge about Whitewater or illegal arms supplies to the Middle East.

The Oklahoma incident bore an uncanny resemblance to an attack portrayed in the novel *The Turner Diaries*, a fantasy about the overthrow of the United States government by neo-Nazi fanatics. In the book, so often cited but so rarely read, the horrific terrorist campaign ultimately succeeded because the resulting state repression alienated so many moderates that they joined the revolutionaries. While Oklahoma City was an isolated crime rather than a phase in an ongoing war, is it really in the public interest to portray so many American citizens as fascist goons?

—*Philip Jenkins*

THE CONTRACT WITH America did not exist before September 1994. This was a time of surprising national fragmentation. Only two months were left before the midterm elections, and all over the country, Republican candidates had built campaigns around radical anti-Washington themes. States' rights were back. State legislatures passed Tenth Amendment resolutions. Militias were organized. We were ruled by the most unpopular President in generations. A rebellious spirit was everywhere evident. Best of all, there was no presidential candidate to swamp the hardcore message of the local candidates.

Polls in September showed the party would do very well in November. That's when the Republican leadership began to worry that they were losing control. Working with pollster Frank Luntz, the leadership put together a document that would, as Newt Gingrich said at the time, "nationalize the message" of the party. Not a person, but a piece of paper would serve as the moderating force. The leadership got commitments from most of the candidates to sign the Contract, and in the end nearly 300 did. What could be the harm? Most of the provisions of the Contract appeared banal if unobjectionable. Certainly, few of the signers suspected the Contract might actually serve to put a lid on the radicals once the next Congress assembled and to make sure the people with a "responsible" agenda stayed in control.

The leadership hired the p.r. firm Creative Response Concepts to organize a media blitz for the Contract, complete with a national TV spot and a massive United States map. The Republican elite touted its glories and promised to enact it once elected, the Democrats denounced it, and the leadership praised it. But, in all, this was a sidelight in a series of exciting state and local elections.

Never did the Contract with America become the focal point in any grass-roots campaign. It was not examined in detail, either by the candidates or the voters. After all, the candidates weren't making contracts with the whole country; they were making contracts with the states and their constituents. Even after the expensive Washington press conference, most candidates continued to speak on the radical antigovernment themes they had used for the past six months. Polling in December, after the Republican sweep, showed that very few voters knew or cared about the Contract. What consumed politically minded people in that month was the damnable lame-duck passage of GATT, orchestrated by the leaders of both parties.

The Contract became crucial only after Congress assembled. Suddenly it was all that mattered. Bill Kristol began throwing wet blankets on the plans of freshmen congressmen to dismantle Washington. He sent memo after memo telling everyone to calm down and stick to the Contract. "Thank God for the Contract," Bill said more than once.

The freshmen wanted to kill congressional pensions, slash income taxes, abolish agencies, shut down buildings, wipe out whole programs, repeal gun control, repeal NAFTA, get out of GATT, scrap foreign aid, and more. It's invigorating just to think about it. But the Contract killed all such plans. A war broke out between the radicals, the moderates, and the liberals in Republican ranks. The media ignored it and continued to pretend that the Speaker was all that mattered. All hopes of real revolution were dashed within the first week.

The Republican leaders claim they kept the promises they made. Yes, they passed the Contract, but individual candidates had promised much more: to dismantle the central state as we know it. The Contract prevented this from happening. Thus, far from celebrating its passage, we should condemn the Contract as an instrument of co-option and betrayal.

The only point in the Contract that actually helps average people (if it gets through the Senate) is the tax package, which provides a per-child tax credit of $500 for families, cuts the capital gains tax, raises the exemption on inheritance income and more (though its Social Security provisions worsened this Ponzi scheme). The rest of the Contract was either meaningless (the Tenth Amendment bill and the antiregulation bill), unenforceable by its own language (the

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anti-U.N. bill), or a step in the wrong direction (it's dumb to force Congress to obey bad civil rights laws, and the line-item veto gives unconstitutional power to the Executive).

Grover Norquist tells us that the Contract will have two lasting effects. There will be another Contract "in 1996 and 1998 and on into the future" and "all congressional elections will be national elections." That means a coercively unified party for the foreseeable future: very bad news indeed.

Let the Republican leadership "take credit" for its first 100 days. It's a public relations gimmick to cover up for such acts as the Mexican bailout, which Gingrich and Dole orchestrated in the only memorable action of this Congress. A real American revolution will have to take place outside the Beltway.

—*Jeffrey Tucker*

CONCEALED GUNS were the topic of a recent marathon hearing in the Texas State Legislature. In the middle of the hearing, one Suzanna Gratia suddenly marched over to Senator Royce West, pointed her index finger at him, and cocked her thumb. "Tell me, Senator," said the good-looking chiropractor about a fellow nearby, "would you like him to have a concealed weapon at this point or not?"

The Lone Star State's lawmakers were debating a law allowing "ordinary" citizens to carry a gun, and viewing the scene on television might have led one to believe Gratia was a distraught woman in favor of stiffer gun-control laws. But that was not the case at all. Gratia and her parents were eating at a Luby's Cafeteria in Killeen, Texas, in October 1991 when a gunman walked in and started blasting away. Her folks were among 21 people murdered. Gratia had left her Smith & Wesson .38 caliber revolver in the trunk of her car because Texas law prohibits mixing guns with vittles. Obeying the law, she lamented, "was the stupidest mistake of my life."

Gratia is just one of the many irate Americans tenaciously pushing state legislatures to allow citizens to carry firearms for protection, and for the most part, politicians are giving the people what they want. But gun owners had better realize that the good times might not last if the gun grabbers ask Congress to strike down right-to-carry gun laws. Moreover, they had better be prepared to make an argument that does not rely on statistics if they want to keep the right to carry guns.

The states that allow citizens to defend themselves or are debating the issue are legion. As of this writing, Virginia was one of many states that liberalized what *Time* magazine calls "carrying-concealed-weapons laws," a term that makes one who carries a gun sound like a riverboat card cheat with a derringer up his sleeve. Arkansas, Utah, Texas, and Idaho are just four more of at least 16 states that were prepared to liberalize right-to-carry laws a few months ago.

The impetus behind this restoration of the right to defend oneself is fear of criminals who may strike anywhere at any time. If you believe television, gun-toting thugs rule the streets of major American cities, where crime affects not only the quotidian routine but also the tourist business. With that in mind, Florida became the testing-ground for a right-to-carry law in 1987. Opponents said minor traffic accidents and traffic jams would erupt into gunfights between irate motorists, but that Wild West scenario never came to pass. Indeed, ever since Floridians reasserted their right to pack a mohaska, handgun murders have dropped 29 percent. One lawmaker who opposed the law said he sees no reason to change it.

For those who publish statistics about homicide and accidental shootings to gin up fear of guns, the numbers from Florida are not encouraging. And it's no surprise that the National Rifle Association and other groups are using Florida as a model for other states where lawmakers have been pushed into acting. Yet crunching numbers will not win the battle. For one thing, Florida's right-to-carry law may have no bearing on the decrease in homicides. For another, homicides could quite easily increase after a right-to-carry law passes. If that happens in Virginia or anywhere else, the gun lobby will have a difficult time arguing that right-to-carry laws are not as ill-conceived as the antigun crowd says they are. Furthermore, it had better be prepared for a fight at the federal level when Sarah Brady and her minions at Handgun Control Inc. begin loading up for bear. After all, if Congress can pass laws regarding the ownership of certain kinds of firearms, it can also pass laws forbidding the right to carry them.

Whatever happens, action on the state level is a welcome development precisely because numbers are not the point; principle is. The state legislators who have shown some spine on this issue have ignited a philosophical and legal debate over firearms that will either bring more states to the Jordan or prompt federal Caesar's usual antigun edict or even both. Such a confrontation between the federal city and states will force a gun owner to make a choice: either carry a gun for self-defense or obey an unjust law. That has always been the choice with gun-control laws, but the issue was never as clear as it is now, when crime and its effects are rapidly spreading from urban nuclei of random violence to the yuppie white suburbs, whence much of the agitation for gun-control emanates.

Americans desire a social order that places a premium on liberty, yet until recently they have been unwilling to accept the dangers that accompany it, which include those associated with the right to own and carry guns. They have been all too willing to look to the government for protection. Now that state legislatures are passing right-to-carry laws, it seems Americans have rediscovered not only the right but also the duty to defend themselves against the depredations of criminals. Perhaps they understand that comprehensive police protection requires revoking the right to self-defense and erecting a totalitarian state, or perhaps rapists and murderers have a way of fixing the mind on something besides Power Rangers.

Whatever the truth, Suzanna Gratia intuitively understands her right to own a gun and what exercising it means: you can defend yourself. Unhappily, she paid a high price for the lesson she learned. She is unlikely to leave her .38 in the car ever again, even if packing it in her purse means breaking an unjust law.

—*R. Cort Kirkwood*

MICHAEL WESTERMAN'S memorial service was held on March 4, appropriately enough on Confederate Flag Day. My friend and fellow Southern Leaguer, Jack Kershaw, and I arrived shortly before noon at the designated meeting-place in Goodlettsville, Tennessee, just north of Nashville on I-65. The sky was late-winter pale blue, and against it, from the throng that had already gathered in the shopping center parking lot, swelled a sea of battle flags. The atmosphere was festive, like a family reunion long delayed. Everywhere strains

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of "Dixie" and other Southern anthems burst forth with unrestrained exuberance. We had come to honor the memory of the dead. But, as with most Southern funerals, significant things occur among the surviving kith and kin. We go to bury our dead and we come away resurrected, our sense of place within the kindred renewed and confirmed. So too at the memorial service and rally in honor of Michael David Westerman, who was murdered in January, allegedly by two carloads of black males who objected to his flying the Confederate battle flag from his truck.

Between 500-600 vehicles initially formed the motorcade that headed north on Highway 41 for Guthrie, Kentucky. Once arrived in Westerman's hometown of 2,000, whole families saluted us from their front yards, and teenagers waved excitedly from the hoods of cars in gas station parking lots. The Flag was everywhere, especially poignant in the hands of little children. Rain clouds loomed in the west, and Jack remarked on the propitiousness of the slain's name; the fate of "Westerman" could yet be the fate of "Western Man" should Southerners be stripped of their culture and civilization. We made our way to the gravesite where Michael Westerman's survivors waited: his young widow, his infant twins, each held by a tearful grandparent. A brisk north wind rippled hundreds of Confederate banners held aloft by the callused hands of God-fearing, law-abiding, working people. During the eulogy someone said that the Justice Department might bring civil rights charges against the alleged assailants. His sidekick shot back, "It'll be a cold day in Hell when they admit that Southerners have civil rights."

From Guthrie, we wound our way to Elkton, home of Todd County High School, Westerman's alma mater. Its sports teams are the "Rebels" and their symbol, the Confederate battle flag. After all, Todd County is the birthplace of Jefferson Davis. The Kentucky NAACP has been agitating against The Flag and other Southern symbols since the fall of 1993. By now our caravan had swelled to nearly 1,000 vehicles (even though the AP wire story reported only 200-300), looking like an invading army.

A country music group was performing Dwight Yoakum's "I Sang Dixie" as the multitude entered Jefferson Davis Park. The ubiquitous Rebel Yell echoed eerily around the grounds and fell silent at the foot of the massive obelisk that is the Davis monument. Following a moving tribute to Westerman by his aunt, speakers from several pro-South organizations—the Southern League, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the Heritage Preservation Association, the Council of Conservative Citizens, among others—fired an already enthusiastic crowd of some 4,000. The Southern League's advocacy of secession as a means of combating the tyranny of a usurping central state met with howls of approval. It was a good day for Southern nationalism. The veterans among us almost to a man said that they had never seen anything quite like this before.

I have no doubt that people went away more inspired and more certain that they still belong to an extended family called The South. They will continue to fly The Flag and keep and bear arms, even though tyrants and thugs in their midst seek to deprive them of both rights, while liberal intellectuals will continue to justify "black rage"—as if any color of rage that manifests itself as murder is acceptable. The Establishment will continue to pass "crime bills," while the Crips and Bloods freely spread mayhem. White Southerners will get more of what Otto Scott calls "retroactive punishment," with the pretext being the rectification of perceived past injustices. I'm reminded of Mick Jagger's "Sympathy for the Devil": "When every cop is a criminal and all the sinners saints . . . "

Our future as Southerners is threatened. Motorcades and rallies are voluntary, and so is allegiance to the South; we wouldn't want it any other way. But if we, as the remnant of Western Man, are to survive to enjoy our voluntary associations, we must close ranks and require of ourselves service to the cause of Southern independence. The gathering in memory of Michael Westerman has shown that Southern nationalism is indeed alive, and with it lives the "last, best hope" for Western Man.

—*Michael Hill*

THE JAPANESE army tortured and murdered American prisoners of war in the 1940's; most people know this. But not many people are aware that Japan—in contrast to Germany, which apologized to former POWs and paid millions of dollars in reparations—refuses even to admit publicly that its military violated basic standards of decency, not to mention the Geneva Convention. This is all the more startling in light of the serious disparity between the treatment our men received in the German POW camps and that accorded to American troops interned in Japan.

According to the Center for Civilian Internee Rights, 12,526 of the 33,587 American soldiers captured by the Japanese died, a mortality rate of 37 percent. While some of these deaths resulted from malnutrition and disease, an untold number died from beatings and torture. In German POW camps, the mortality rate was one percent, even though the Nazis had 96,614 captives, nearly three times as many as their Asian allies.

Japan's refusal to concede that any atrocities took place prompted Gilbert M. Hair, himself a survivor of the camps, to launch the Center for Civilian Internee Rights, which has filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government in an effort to win reparations and to redress what he calls the "intolerable discrepancy" between German and Japanese responses to past crimes. The center encourages all survivors of the Japanese camps and their next of kin to participate in this class action. Papers must be filed with the organization's lawyers before August 1, 1995. For more information, write to Mr. Hair at the Center for Civilian Internee Rights, Inc., 6060 La Gorce Drive, Miami Beach, Florida, 33140, or call 305-864-2558.

—*Michael Washburn*

OBITER DICTA: *Immigration and the American Identity*, a book of essays by 23 *Chronicles* contributors, is still available at the discount price—$12.95 plus $2.50 for shipping and handling. For ordering, see the ad on the inside back-cover.

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by Samuel Francis

A Boundless Field of Power

Does the United States Constitution still exist? There is one simple way to answer this question. Read any article or section of the 200-year-old document written to provide the citizens of a free republic with a short and simple guide to what their government can and cannot do and ask whether the language you have just perused remains operative today. With the possible exception of the clause requiring that the President of the United States be more than 35 years of age, hardly any of it does. Almost all of the "important" parts of the Constitution today—the First Amendment, the Commerce Clause, the 14th Amendment, war powers, etc.—through the endless machinations of lawyers and the meddling of judges and courts, means something other than, and sometimes the direct opposite of, what the language plainly says, and in addition there are at least two "unimportant" parts, the Second and Tenth Amendments, that have virtually disappeared. Unable to twist and torture the language of those amendments to suit their fancies, the courts have simply ignored them and pretended they no longer exist.

Instead of the plain text of the Constitution, what we have today are merely the collected musings of various judges and justices, organized into convenient little formulas like the "Lemon Test" or the "reindeer rule" and arbitrary definitions of such matters as "obscenity," "privacy," and "interstate commerce," that simply emerged from the whims and private dogmas of the magistrates, if not from those of beardless clerks just hatched from the nests of Cambridge and New Haven. Not only does the "constitution" that such formulas compose remain unratified by the states or the people, but most citizens do not even know it exists at all and fondly imagine that the document of Madison and Hamilton still governs the government.

Nevertheless, if the old Constitution has vanished from the courts, the minds of the judiciary, and the instruction of the law schools, it does sometimes still kick in the memories of the people themselves. The resurrection of the Second Amendment last year in a massive popular rebellion against congressional violations of the rights of gun owners is clear evidence of this, as is an even more remarkable resuscitation of the other part of the Lost Constitution, the Tenth Amendment itself.

Long dismissed by late 20th-century jurists as without substance to anyone save antiquarians and Southern segregationists, the Tenth Amendment was considered by Thomas Jefferson to represent "the foundation of the Constitution," and he warned George Washington that "to take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specially drawn . . . is to take possession of a boundless field of power, no longer susceptible of any definition." In the last few years, as gun owners, farmers and ranchers, the governors of half a dozen states, and even Republican presidential candidates have stepped forward to invoke the amendment and denounce the federal government for its systematic invasions and violations of the states' rights the amendment protects, Jefferson's warning remains as relevant as ever. Indeed, Republican leaders like Newt Gingrich and Bob Dole, who have crooned over the amendment all year and claim to have based parts of their Contract with America on it, ought to think about what it really means as Jefferson and most other constitutional authorities of the Old Republic understood it.

Republican invocations of the Tenth this year have been instigated mainly by what the GOP considers its stroke of genius in designing a welfare reform measure that works through "block grants" to the states from the federal government, and the party's leaders repeatedly make the claim that this apparent decentralization of power represents a restoration of the amendment and a devolution of power to the states. Of course it means no such thing, if only because the funds for the block grants come from the federal government, or, more exactly, the American taxpayer, so that citizens in Alabama and Wyoming will still wind up paying for welfare in New York and California. Indeed, the flaw of block grants and the whole concept of "revenue sharing," beloved of modern Republicans, was exposed by Andrew Jackson in his veto of a law sponsored by Henry Clay that would have awarded funds from the sale of federal lands to the states for their own internal purposes. "It appears to me," wrote Jackson, "that a more direct road to consolidation cannot be devised" than Clay's revenue sharing proposal. "Money is power, and in that government which pays the public officers of the states will all political power be substantially concentrated. The state governments, if governments they might be called, would lose all their independence and dignity," and the officers of the states "would, in effect, be the mere stipendiaries and instruments of the central power." Having devised compelling empirical arguments for the outright abolition of welfare, the Republicans proceeded to ignore their own ideology and develop a welfare plan that not only perpetuates the most thoroughly discredited public policy of the federal government but does so through a dishonest and dangerous rationale.

If it were only Republicans who invoked the Tenth Amendment, citizens might be well advised to ignore all the noise being made about it, but in fact no small part of the authentic Middle American resistance to the federal leviathan is wrapped up in more serious discussions of the Tenth and the real federalism of which the amendment remains the heart. There is hardly a single issue involved in that resistance today that is not closely connected with it. Not long after the silly "Brady Law" requiring a federally mandated waiting period for the purchase of handguns went into effect, several sheriffs in the Western part of the country announced that they would refuse to enforce the law in their jurisdictions. At least one of them, in Montana, was upheld by a federal judge on the grounds of the Tenth Amendment. In other states, governors themselves have invoked it, citing federal intrusion into such matters as education (Virginia), federal abortion regulations (Pennsylvania), welfare for immigrants (California and Florida), and unfunded mandates generally. In Nevada last year,

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local ranchers, with the support of a county commissioner, nearly had a gunfight with officials of the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management when the citizens decided to ignore federal regulations on land use and started building their own road where federal regs declared they couldn't. "We were proving our point that they don't have jurisdiction," said the county potentate, who habitually carries a copy of the Constitution (the old one) in his pocket. In other areas, similar conflicts between locals and federals—over environmental regulations and laws, for instance—have provoked the same kind of confrontations that are beginning to resemble older fights that took place at Lexington, Concord, and Fort Sumter.

Conservative academics can explore the theoretical justifications for secession all they want, but the real action these days is not in talking the talk but in walking the walk, and in the last couple of years, plain citizens who have never heard of Alexander Stephens and care little for Jefferson Davis have started their own secession movement. Unlike their theoretical counterparts, they are not inventing reasons to avoid political activism or to start their own country. What they want to secede from is not the country itself but Washington and the leviathan headquartered there, and fantasies about throwing the Yankees out of Atlanta do nothing to advance the cause they share with the more serious and principled foes of centralization.

Nevertheless, the Tenth Amendment movement, if it is a movement, would not be hurt by a bit more command of theory and principle before it marches up Bunker Hill. In the 1970's, the New Right was also contemptuous of political theory, and when its leaders finally gained some measure of political power, they quickly found that they had only a foggy idea of what they wanted to do and why they wanted to do it. The result was that the successful New Right was quickly gobbled up by neoconservatives, who possessed a clearer vision of what to do with the power they craved but could not win through elections.

There seems to be a similar problem with the leaders of Tenth Amendment activism, as illustrated by the remark of one newly converted apostle of states' rights, Utah Governor Mike Leavitt, last year. "I'm not arguing for this [states' rights] on the basis of some ideology. I'm arguing for more state autonomy based on the fact that what we've got isn't working." This, of course, is simply the voice of pragmatism, a principled refusal to invoke principle, and like all pragmatism it will eventually be swallowed up by someone or something else. Mr. Leavitt, it must be recalled, is not only a governor but also a Republican.

The main danger the Tenth Amendment movement faces is also its main strength, namely, that it is not "principled," that it is a response to practical grievances experienced by those who have come to perceive the federal government as the main cause of their grievances. Hence, the danger is that as soon as those specific grievances are removed or massaged (which is exactly what much of the Republicans' Contract tries to do), the movement will wither. Moreover, serious supporters of Tenth Amendment federalism need to remember that whatever costs federal aggrandizement imposes on the states and citizens, there are many who gain from it and from the calculated obsolescence of the amendment. That is one major reason why the segregationists' use of the amendment never went very far. Having happily wallowed in federal grease when checks for farm subsidies were in the mail, the Southerners could not expect to be taken very seriously when they whined about states' rights in the face of federally enforced integration.

A movement for restoring reality to the Tenth Amendment can be taken seriously, not just when pragmatists like Governor Leavitt learn something about the principles they casually and ignorantly invoke, but when social and economic groups are willing to support real federalism even against their own interests. The artfulness of the political revolution that has destroyed authentic republicanism and converted state and local government into Jackson's "mere stipendiaries and instruments of the central power" is that the revolution succeeded in wedding social and economic groups to that power. Just as Hamilton and Clay tried to buy up and bind together local interests with their projects for national banks, tariffs, and internal improvements, so the architects of the modern managerial state have constructed a federal architecture that buys up and binds together strategic social and economic elites. The intellectual and verbalist classes have been bought by federal funding of education, the arts, and humanities and by federal entrenchment of a radically expanded interpretation of the First Amendment that allows the eggheads to mouth off about any stupidity that pops into their heads without fear of local sedition and obscenity laws. Labor and racial minorities have been bought by federal legislation that creates special privileges for them. Big Business (including agribusiness) has been bought by direct subsidies and monetary and tax policies that favor bigness and concentration over smaller competitors. The new proletariat created by mass immigration is being bought simply by the federal leviathan's refusal to enforce its own laws against illegal entry and by forcing the states to assume the burdens that ensue. The only people who have not been bought are Middle Americans themselves, who are expected to pay for the bargains they are getting and to endure their consequences in silence. That, of course, is why there is an incipient Middle American Revolution at all.

Simply because so many Americans now depend, directly or indirectly, on the federal leviathan and the other people's money that it so generously shares with those who have no right to it, restoration of the Tenth Amendment in the way that Jefferson and Jackson would have wanted may not now be possible. But even a partial restoration would rip much of the guts out of the leviathan and so disrupt it that it could no longer function, and there can be no doubt that in recent years there have emerged several concrete social and economic groups with real and deep interests in at least some restriction of federal power. If enough such groups can crystallize and invest their revolt with a serious understanding of what federalism means and how it can be advanced, then a real restoration of the Tenth Amendment, and not merely Republican manipulation of slogans, may become possible as Americans come to perceive the real costs of the "boundless field of power, no longer susceptible of any definition," to which the destruction of the Old Republic has delivered us as Jefferson warned it would.

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H. Ward Stuett

It's Stupid, the Economy

Culture and Immigration

by Thomas Fleming

Why should "a magazine of American culture" take so keen an interest in the question of immigration? That question has been posed all too frequently by journalists who can only think of one answer: bigotry. Sometimes the word is xenophobia or nativism or even anti-Semitism (apparently on the grounds that the bottom-line of all discriminations is hostility to Jews). Questions asked in manifestly bad faith do not deserve an answer except, perhaps, a *tu quoque* question: What possible motivation is there for an American *not* to be alarmed by the current immigration crisis?

I have never understood how the advocates of open borders have escaped with their reputations intact. For one thing, new immigrants typically come in at or near the bottom of the economic scale and threaten the job prospects and chances for promotion of the poorest American workers, many of whom are black or Hispanic. One set of liberals (those who have been allegedly mugged by reality) cheered their heads off when Korean shopkeepers shot black looters in Los Angeles, but as much as I favor property rights and self-defense, I could squint my eyes for a moment and see not shopkeepers defending their property but well-to-do foreigners firing at poor Americans. Julian Simon and other capitalist fanatics see, on the one hand, cheap Latin American laborers coming in droves to bust the unions and, on the other, a fresh supply of professional talent—physicians, engineers, mathematicians, and scientists—arriving from Asia. But Asian countries are in desperate need of these professionals, and it seems a heartlessness more wicked than any xenophobia to drain off the brains of an entire continent simply because we are unwilling to arrest the steady decline of higher education in the United States. If we *were* bigots, we would agree with Julian Simon, and if this country becomes an impossible place to live in by the end of the century, our rich friends will be able to take the money and run. That is the nice thing about disloyalty: it acknowledges no borders and no commitments.

Our interest in questions of national identity and immigration is not recent. Before I arrived at *Chronicles* in 1984, I had already been discussing the topic, and it was not long before I arranged for an essay by Clyde Wilson on the historical basis of American culture. Within a few years we were raising the question in a variety of ways, and, predictably, we were denounced everywhere, not so much by leftists *per se* as by the Northeastern political analysts who described themselves as "neoconservatives." While many of these neoconservatives have come around to our point of view, so far as I can recall, they have never either apologized for their slanders nor accorded us even grudging acknowledgment that our prophecies have proved to be all too accurate.

It is precisely because *Chronicles* is "a magazine of American culture" that we felt compelled to ask such questions as "What is American culture?" and "What does it mean to be an American?" The pat liberal answers that America is a set of ideas or a nation "dedicated to a proposition" were so obviously fatuous as to require no refutation. A nation, no matter how it is formed, must be something more than a set of government institutions or a political creed. For one thing, laws and political practices are never made up out of whole cloth, and most of the excellencies of the American system can be traced directly to the British institutions that had taken root in the American colonies before their independence. It is also obvious that most nations, including the United States, are bound together by a common language, by a set of literary classics that exemplify a common moral code and the nation's conception of itself, by thousands and thousands of little "habits of the heart" that constitute the national character.

Since a culture is both the product and origin of a people's

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character, it seemed to us that changes in the ethnic composition of a nation would also change its character, its values, its identity. Although most of the immigration debate has been carried on like a price war between two fishwives in the marketplace, we realized very early on that it really did not matter, ultimately, whether the new immigrants were an economic asset or liability. As I used to point out in debates, it might be possible to kill all the current inhabitants of the United States with a neutron bomb and restock the land with very talented Chinese or Germans or even extraterrestrial colonists who would double the GNP in a year. That even those who favor open immigration are uncomfortable with such a notion reveals the comparative insignificance of the economic dimension of the problem. The debate has been carried out with numbers, partly because modern Americans are suckers for anything that can be represented with charts and graphs and partly because statistics on welfare and taxes are safer than discussions of national identity and moral principles. As it turns out, the best economic analysis also supports those in favor of immigration restrictions, but that, so far as I am concerned, is only confirmation of something we already knew to a moral certainty.

Culture, properly defined, means the cultivation of a certain kind of character. Cultural institutions, therefore, are the agents that make us who and what we are. Like Tennyson's Ulysses you and I can say "I am a part of all that I have met": the books we read, the music we listen to, the pictures we look at, the prayers we say. A culture is the sum of all these things and many more, including table manners and styles of dress. As an American poet put it: "The way you wear your hat, the way you drink your tea . . ."

Aside from the exceptional examples of a few really successful empires—of Rome, Byzantium, and Vienna—vigorous cultures tend to be particular and local, rather than generic and universal. America in the 18th century was a patchwork of 13 separate colonies, each with its own story to tell, each with its own peculiar character determined by the part of Britain from which the majority of inhabitants derived. Even in the old country a Cambridgeshire Puritan had been quite different from the Wessex Anglican whose descendants came to Virginia, and both were easily distinguishable from the Scots and Irish.

Many states were large enough to accommodate at least two cultures. In South Carolina, for example, the Low country was dominated by a strange mixture of English Anglicans, many of whom had arrived by way of the Caribbean Islands, and the French Huguenots; while the Upcountry was settled mainly by the Scots and Irish, who envied and hated the aspiring aristocrats of Charleston. Calhoun's great principle of concurrent majorities was derived in part from South Carolina's successful attempt to make a constitution that protected the rights and liberties of both sections.

Pennsylvania showed a similar pattern of settlement, except that in Philadelphia the tone was set by wealthy Quakers, but up in the hills, where the peace-loving Quakers did not dare set foot for fear of the Redskins whom they were content to love and cherish only from a safe distance, that dangerous backcountry was settled by the violent and fearless Scots-Irish, followed by colonies of more peaceable Germans.

In time, many of America's local peculiarities died out, leaving only a few fossils in the form of dialect expressions and local recipes. Some Midwesterners still say pret'ner and refer to dragon flies as darning needles. New England cooking is still the worst in the world, followed by the Midwest variant that includes the blandest dishes of the Puritans—boiled dinners—which they combined with some filthy habits they picked up from German immigrants: bland sausages, boiled potatoes, and the endless and inedible varieties of the Midwestern hot dish.

In the Carolinas, however, there is still a great gulf separating the civilized folk of Charleston from the wild men up country, and across the nation there remain broad cultural variations that mark out the Southern region from the Northeast. But vast sections of the United States—most of California and much of the Midwest—were so ethnically jumbled by the 19th-century folk-migrations that they ceased to have any kind of culture. Between the two world wars, Glenway Wescott returned to Wisconsin and described the conversation of his fellow-passengers on a train: "They speak a mixture of several kinds of English—Swedish, German, Polish, Irish—immigrants' children of the second generation having inherited from all their parents at once, all the accents."

The melting pot, as it has been observed, did not actually work, but Nathan Glazer's confident description of the "unmeltable ethnics" has not survived either. Most immigrant groups have neither adopted the culture of the old British stock nor preserved their ancestral folkways. This is a pity, since Italian, French, and German immigrants—to take only three examples—come from cultural traditions that are richer than anything in 20th-century America. But culture—the character of a nation—is always local, always particular. Robert Frost discussed the problems of immigration and multiculturalism in his poem "Build Soil":

My friends all know I'm interpersonal.
But long before I'm interpersonal
Away 'way down inside I'm personal.
Just so before we're international
We're national and act as nationals.
The colors are kept unmixed on the palette,
Or better on dish plates all around the room,
So the effect when they are mixed on canvas
May seem almost exclusively designed.
Some minds are so confounded intermental
They remind me of pictures on a palette:
"Look at what happened. Surely some God *pinxit*.
Come look at my significant mud pie."
It's hard to tell which is the worst abhorrence
Whether it's persons pied or nations pied.
Don't let me seem to say the exchange, the encounter,
May not be the important thing at last.
It well may be. We meet—I don't say when—
But must bring to the meeting the maturest,
The longest-saved-up, raciest, localest
We have strength of reserve in us to bring.

Today in this "nation pied" whose art at best resembles an insignificant mud pie, we have little either racy or local to bring to a meeting of cultures. At the end of the millennium, perhaps, a majority of Americans are acculturated only by the mass media of television, movies, and popular music, by the mass-produced designer-label goods they buy and consume, and by the vast machinery of government schooling that every year turns out the perfect ignoramuses who pose absolutely no threat to the regime.

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For much of this century America has been described as a kind of experiment or a laboratory of democracy in which a new kind of democratic man is being molded by a new democratic culture. Such was the vision of the American Marx, John Dewey, but its finest rhetorical expression was Herbert Croly's *The Promise of American Life*. Croly was the son of English immigrants and the founding editor of the *New Republic*—an organ of lies and mischief from its first issue. According to Croly, the old provincial America of the colonies, the revolution, and the Constitution would have to give way to a new democratic America that would devour what was left of the original—like a snake eating the skin it has shed: "To be sure," concedes Croly,

> any increase in centralized power and responsibility . . . is injurious to certain aspects of traditional American democracy. But the fault in that case lies with the democratic tradition; and the erroneous and misleading tradition [i.e., of localism and individual responsibility] must yield before the march of constructive national democracy. . . . The tradition of an individualist and provincial democracy which is the mainstay of the anti-nationalist policy, does not include ideals which have to be realized by aggressive action. . . . The advocates and the beneficiaries of prevailing ideas and conditions are little by little being forced into the inevitable attitude of the traditional Bourbon—the attitude of maintaining customary or legal rights merely because they are customary and legal. . . . Popular interests have nothing to fear from a measure of federal centralization, which bestows on the Federal government powers necessary to the fulfillment of its legitimate responsibilities.

But what has grown up on American soil, under the nurture of such Croly disciples as Franklin Roosevelt, has not been a vigorous national culture. America is no new Athens or Florence; our culture is not even equal to that of ancient Sicyon or medieval Lucca. We have not even managed to reproduce the civility of the polyglot Habsburg empire, where you can still eat an excellent veal paprikash or Dobosh Tort in Zagreb. All we have grown by all our ferment is a culture of tooth-rotting Coca-Cola, ulcer-inspiring Big Macs, and tight jeans advertised by the jutting rumps of preteen models; our literature is Stephen King, our theater is Seinfeld; our music and poetry are summed up in "Achey-Breaky Heart."

Many of us know the causes of America's cultural implosion, but I shall list a few of them: first, the decline of the church as a central social, moral, and literary influence. An ignoramus like Lincoln could manage to sound like a great writer simply by echoing the phrases of the King James Bible that were constantly ringing in his nonbelieving ears. Today even religious zealots—Catholics and Evangelicals alike—have their aesthetic sensibilities trained on liturgies that read like executive summaries of reports from Washington think tanks and on hymns that sound like airline commercials. What they have done to the Bible is unspeakable. From the Good News Bible: "When I was a child, my speech, feelings, and thinking were all those of a child; now that I am a man, I have no more use for childish ways. What we see now is like a dim image in a mirror . . ."

Second, the general collapse of all literary and aesthetic standards at the top levels of society. There are a number of causes for this collapse, but none so important as the abandonment of Latin as the basis of serious education. (On this point, see Christian Kopff's essay in this issue.) Today our art, for the most part, is reduced to the cult of ugliness and nonsense, the worship of violence and perversity. Culture, in the sense of high culture, is now something reserved to museums, reprints of the classics, and concert halls where they perform very little that has been written since the end of World War I and virtually nothing composed since World War II. In the 1820's, concert-goers did not want to hear the stuffy old music of Haydn; they wanted the new stuff—Beethoven, Rossini, Weber. During the Renaissance, the lust for new painting was so powerful that many of Michelangelo's frescoes are painted on top of important works of his predecessors. Today, our best efforts go to restoration and preservation—quite naturally, since most new things are so hideous, but a civilization whose culture is locked away in museums is a dead civilization.

Third, the lethal effects of immigration and cultural amalgamation that Frost warned against. In recent days, America's diversity is the basis of a culture war in which the various competing groups—blacks, Latin-American Indians, and Asians—are each claiming a share of the humanities curriculum. Even if the cultural pretensions of Africans and Indians had any validity, which for the most part they do not, their merits would be irrelevant, because for us, as heirs of Western Europe, it is vital that we know our own history, our own culture, because it is this culture, the languages, the literature, the art, the philosophy, the deeds of great men—it is "the memory of all that" that has formed the Western and American character and shaped those principles of moral responsibility and political liberty which are so important to that saving remnant, the members of this club, whatever their ethnic heritage, whatever their education. The struggle over the curriculum is a war for the American identity and multiculturalism is a crusade—or rather a *jihad*—to destroy the liberties we have retained, despite the best efforts of every president and every editor of the *New Republic* throughout this century.

Predictably, the very people who got us into our current cultural predicament are coming forward with a solution. Some time ago in a debate on immigration a very good *Wall Street Journal* editor told me that we could not and should not do anything to stanch the flow of Third World immigrants, but that once they were here, they should be subject to a program of forced Americanization. Other, similar remedies include: national identity cards, citizenship classes, a compulsory public service program for high school graduates, a constitutional amendment making English the official language. Less obvious but more ominous is all the chatter we are hearing about a need for national standards in education. In fact, much of what went on at the Department of Education in the Reagan-Bush years was an ill-disguised campaign to impose a national culture by way of public schools that are to be controlled in Washington.

The object of some of these programs is the minority underclass—black and Hispanic—that has the ruling establishment terrified. Do not be misled by their humanitarian professions to be, in Adam Meyerson's phrase, bleeding-heart conservatives. Of course their fear of being called racists explains part of their empowerment rhetoric—to say nothing of their desire for votes—but when the hour is late and they have had one drink too many, some of our big government conservative friends will admit, quite candidly, that all their schemes have one object: to keep blacks and Hispanics in their place, first by bribing them

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with welfare, and second by giving them the cultural equivalent of toilet-training. They are also, by the way, afraid of ordinary Middle Americans whom they suspect of plotting a mutiny.

Let me be just as candid. I have enough to worry about, taking care of my family, attending to my job, and working to bring some sanity to my own people. I have no time to spend on civil war in Rwanda or Chicago, or literacy in Haiti and Los Angeles. If an ethnic group cannot create or maintain a viable culture on its own, it is probably incapable of taking cultural instruction from me. The dismal history of colonization should convince us that the most successful colonies, e.g., in North America, are those which committed either accidental or intentional genocide, but in Africa white Europeans succeeded only in corrupting and destroying the native cultures without, in most cases, converting the Africans to European culture. I am not sure that such a conversion would have been a good idea. It is the rankest kind of ethnocentricity to suppose that there is only one right way for people to live, and the West's continuing crusades to impose peace and democracy in Iraq, Haiti, and Somalia are really neocolonialist filibusters against peoples that are not adequately integrated into global markets.

In America, we have tried such schemes of forced assimilation before, but without success. Indeed, much of American social policy is a series of failed cultural experiments practiced upon immigrant groups: the public schooling that was supposed to protestantize the Catholics; delinquency laws and mandatory school attendance that took children away from irresponsible immigrants; Head Start, school equity plans, and all the vast apparatus of social engineering that were designed to tame blacks, Mexicans, Sicilians, and Appalachian whites but only succeeded in destroying what particles and pockets of native cultures these people possessed. So long as they had the benefit of segregated schools run by a black middle class, so long as black preachers were figures of authority and respect within the community, so long as young black males were expected to work for a living, black Americans as a whole were making steady economic and even cultural progress. The so-called Harlem Renaissance took place in the 20's and 30's—before the establishment of the welfare state. Tourists still go to visit Harlem, but it is not to hear jazz; now foreigners take tours in armored buses to get a glimpse of the violent and degenerate society they have read about in their newspapers.

Cultural nationalism is an unmitigated evil, and I would not hesitate to call it fascism, if it were not unfair to the Duce. Given the choice between the antiwhite, antistraight, antimale bigotry of the left and the National Socialism offered by the Republican mountebanks selling virtue in a bottle or a book, I prefer the left, because with them the war is open and waged without hypocrisy. Besides, all their petty nationalisms might even lead to something like literature and art, while the big government conservatives would turn us into a nation of indoctrination camps in the form of the public schools that are at the center of many of their schemes.

The best hope for American culture today resides in the local, provincial, and ethnic remnants that are struggling to survive; they would be the first victims of cultural nationalism. From everything I can see, there is still vitality in the South and it is growing in the West. In fact, we are living in a time when the massive imperial cultures in the world are all breaking up, and ours is no exception. One evil empire has already collapsed, and the days may be numbered for its opposite number in the West. I do not say there is anything we can or should do to hasten the social and political disintegration of these once United States. On the other hand, something quite different is bound to emerge in the near future: perhaps it will be a slowly decentralizing political system that evolves in the direction of 1787; perhaps it will break up into independent states or regional confederacies; perhaps there will be a tribal warfare within the regions; and perhaps there is even the possibility of a stopgap solution of national socialism imposed by the current elite class. Whatever comes, the real vitality of the nation will continue to be found not in Washington or New York or Hollywood, but in little communities and societies: in the states of the South and West, in groups of men and women who reject both cultural nationalism and the policy of nonresistance that has led to the current immigration crisis. As Alain de Benoist has written of his own country, France, the problem is not so much the cultural wreckage inflicted by too many Third World immigrants who are, after all, only looking for a better life, but in the apparent inability of Europeans and Americans to defend their civilization. C

Ballade of the Literates

by Gail White

The Inquisition's on the loose
(the dying François Villon said),
and poets' lives are little use,
so watch your step to save your head.
Remember, when your comrade's dead,
he left a short but useful creed:
Until you lie upon this bed,
tell no one you can write and read.

Said Jeremiah (that old recluse):
The Jews have reached a watershed.
The King of Babylon's tied the noose
and Judah's hanging by a thread.
The wise will leave their wit unsaid;
a clever slave is never freed,
but pity spares the dunderhead—
Tell no one you can write and read.

When politicians wax abstruse,
you know the budget's in the red!
Be sparing of your sage abuse
and keep the IRS misled.
Hold all authorities in dread
and memorize in case of need:
"What books? We watch TV instead."
Tell no one you can write and read.

L'Envoi

Princes, the printed word is sped;
fluorescent screens have got the lead.
Now Apple reigns in Milton's stead.
Tell no one you can write and read.

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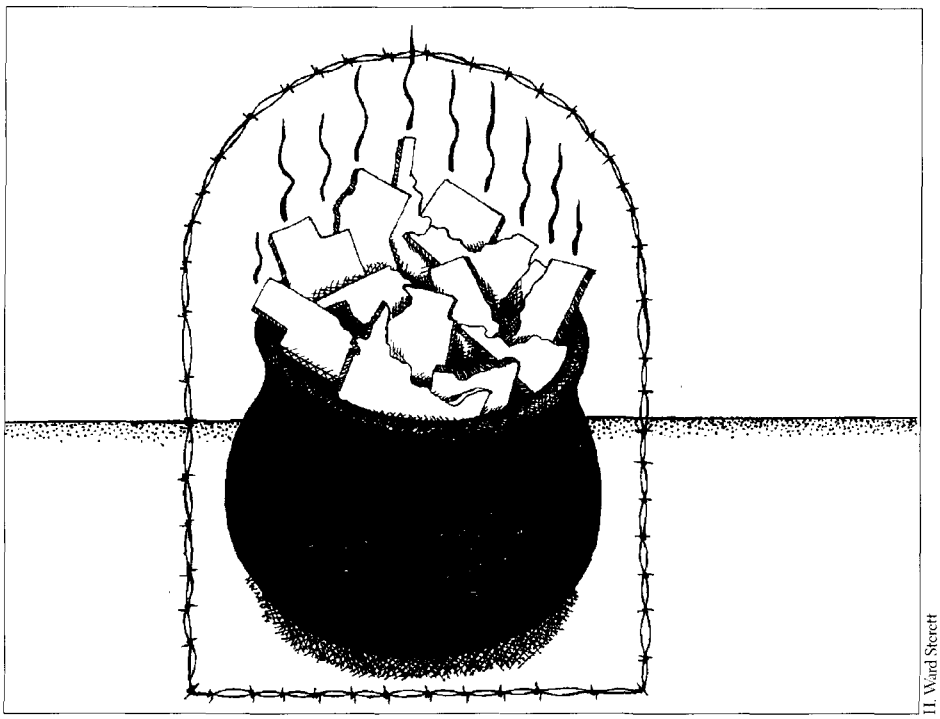
Sweet Land of Liberty

by Murray N. Rothbard



H. Ward Sterett

I am deeply honored to receive the Richard Weaver Award, to stand in the ranks of the distinguished men who have received it, and to have an award in the name of a man who has always been one of my heroes. As a lifelong libertarian, I have been moved by the occasion to reflect on one of the most important questions of our time: What exactly is the relationship between the principles of liberty, the "abstract" principles if you will, and the undeniable fact that they were instantiated most fully and gloriously in the Old Republic, in the United States of America, in the old patriotic hymn the "sweet land of liberty," at least until recent decades?

Free-market economists generally focus on the point, which I believe undeniable, that a free-market economy, and its necessary underpinnings, the secure rights of private property, will vivify any culture, any civilization. The people of any country will be immeasurably better off to the extent that they enjoy a free market and its blessings. One of the most inspiring works by my favorite "development economist," Lord Peter Bauer, was his first book, *West African Trade*, which demonstrated in detail that the back country jungles of Nigeria and what is now Ghana prospered from a vast network of market exchanges along the jungle trails, markets which were largely unknown by the British officials luxuriating in the capital city or by their African Marxist successors. To the extent that these rural markets were known, of course, they were crippled by taxes and government controls.

Conceding this point, what interests me here is the opposite question: What was there about America that led to the widest and deepest example in history of secure property rights, liberty, and freedom of enterprise? Part of the answer was supplied in the excellent little book by the French economic historian Jean Baechler, *The Origins of Capitalism*. Baechler locates the origins of the highly and uniquely developed market economy in Western Europe in two interrelated facts from early centuries of the Christian era: first, the policies were so remarkably decentralized that there were literally hundreds of small sovereign states or quasi-states instead of one mighty empire; and second, for the first time in world history, there was no state-run Church; in other words, the Christian Church was transnational and therefore could and did function as a mighty check upon state power. As a result of these lucky or providential circumstances, an international market could develop, and private individuals and groups could flourish more or less free of state power and depredations. I would add another important point: that Christianity is the only religion that I know of that is individualist rather than collectivist, whose focus is *not* the tribe or the city-state or some universal pantheistic blob, but the person and his salvation, not only a person made in God's image, but one in whom God Himself had become incarnate.

So the first reason America became the sweet land of liberty is that its heritage was Western European, the creation of those current villains, dead white European males. But what led

Murray N. Rothbard (1926-1995) received the Ingersoll Foundation's 1994 Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters, for which this was his acceptance speech.

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America to surpass the liberties of the Old World?

As if this question were not broad enough to tackle, I would also like to reflect this afternoon on an interrelated question: What made America into a nation? And what *is* a "nation," anyway? It seems clear to me that a country or a nation can be held together *either* by a dynastic empire, such as the Habsburgs; by ethnic ties, such as we are seeing in the new nations of Europe and western Asia; by some overarching idea or ideology, such as communism (although the Soviet Union was also in many ways a cover for imperial domination by Russia over other nationalities); or by some unique blend of the last two, which I hope to show was the case in the United States.

We start our treatment of these cosmically broad questions by harking back to what is supposed to be an old discredited myth: that North America, despite the Indians, was basically an empty continent. Compared with densely populated Western Europe, North America *was* a rich and empty land, full of great resources, ready to be settled. Being relatively empty, the land was peopled by various groups of settlers, each of whom could do in the New World what they could never do in the Old: set up their own cherished institutions without rubbing up against each other.

It is a cliché that America is uniquely a nation of immigrants, and from this supposed fact, the intellectual and media elites, from left-liberal to left-libertarian to neoconservative, go on to celebrate the multicultural melting pot or mosaic of America. Moreover, these same elites are using this alleged tradition to stimulate an ingathering of one and all, thereby turning America into what Ben Wattenberg calls the "first universal nation." There are several grave problems with this disastrous oxymoron. The whole point of a nation is that it *cannot* be "universal." To have a country or a nation at all, there must be close ties of shared customs and traditions, values, principles, and institutions. These ties cannot be imposed externally and suddenly by fiat, or by a handful of bureaucrats or ideologues. They must grow, "organically" as it were, over the centuries, from within or from below among the people. In almost all cases, the foundation of these ties is a shared ethnicity, which inspires and cements the common customs, principles, and institutions. That is why the collapse by the end of World War I of multinational dynasties such as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the recent glorious crumbling of the imperial, ideological, multinational Soviet Union, have allowed ethnic nations, or nation-states, to come powerfully to the fore.

If there are no such shared ethnic and cultural bonds within a country, then the "country" cannot be a nation at all: it can only be a congeries of clashing peoples and groups, held together by the coercive force of the state apparatus, which grows and swells in its attempt to try to hold the collapsing entity together. The state apparatus, of course, does not mind this process at all, since under the cover of a grotesquely warped form of "patriotism," it can maximize its own power at the expense of persons, families, communities, and local governments, which may be the point of the whole exercise. Tragically, this is precisely what has been happening to our beloved country, our once vibrant and now dying nation, America.

Let us look more closely at the slogan that "we are a nation of immigrants." It may be true enough, but it misses the point: *every* nation on the face of the earth, after all, was originally settled by immigrants. The difference is that these other nations of immigrants were by and large ethnically homogeneous, and each of them—Welsh, Serbs, Tajiks, or Uzbeks—has more or less settled into its own territory, if not always its own nation-state. Of course, there were many admixtures, many places where, for various reasons, no one ethnic group was preponderant. But America needs to realize that it is precisely those areas—whether Bosnia, or Afghanistan, or Northern Ireland—where bloody conflict seems to be unrelenting and eternal. The idea of the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups within a country is a chimera, an absurd and impossible dream that turns rapidly into a nightmare. National and ethnic separation, each group with its own nation or country, seems to be the only workable solution.

> What does 'American' *mean* nowadays, except to be born on American territory, to be entitled to welfare benefits, or to be subject to American taxes?

And here we need to point out that a shared religion is, in virtually every case, a necessary part of ethnicity. This truth offends modern liberal ideologues, left and right, who like to think of religion as uniquely personal to each individual. In fact, a religion is always a community, a community of specific creeds, liturgies, and buildings. It is a community of ideas and practices that parents pass on to their children.

But does this not contradict one of my first points: that a crucial reason for the freedom, the economic prosperity, and the glorious civilization of Western Europe was that the state did not dominate and cripple the Church, that the Christian Church, at least before the Reformation, was transnational? Not at all, for the same Christian or Catholic Church, even when all services were in Latin, took a different cultural form in each country. There was no mistaking the differences, for example, between Italian and Irish Catholicism. Furthermore, because the Church was transnational, it could not be dominated by the state, whose power over civil society was kept within strict limits.

How did America forge a new nation out of these diverse groups of immigrants? The answer is worked out in *Albion's Seed*, in which David Hackett Fischer demonstrates that the *founding* immigrant groups in America, virtually all the immigrants in the first two of the four centuries of American life, came from the British Isles. It is true that these immigrant groups came from different regions of Britain, and that they settled homogeneously in different regions. Essentially, there were three groups: *Puritans*, who came mainly from East Anglia and settled in close-knit townships in New England; *Cavaliers*,

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who came from Wessex in southern England, and settled on large plantations in the tidewater South; and, in the 18th century, large numbers of *Scotch-Irish*, who came from the fierce and warring border country in northern England, southern Scotland, and northern Ireland, who settled as individualistic farmers in the back country of Southern and Middle Atlantic America.

Each of these groups had very different values, mores, institutions, and temperaments, and they often clashed when brought together. They were all British and almost all Protestants, although even their Protestantism varied markedly, but they were still all British, and all were Christians. Hence, despite their numerous differences, they were able to forge a new nation in opposition to the British attempt to reimpose an empire upon the colonies, which had been allowed, for various reasons, to acquire *de facto* independence. The Americans could form a new nation because the conditions for a single nation existed: a common language, a common ethnicity, a common British heritage, and even a common religion. The inherited British principles were essentially libertarian, stressing limited government, parliamentary institutions, local liberties, freedom of speech and assembly, free markets, and the rights of private property.

In creating the new nation, the Founding Fathers did a truly remarkable job, performed an extraordinarily difficult task phenomenally well. If you want to get depressed, consider the men who forged first the new state governments with their written constitutions binding down government, then the Articles of Confederation, and finally the Constitution. Even focusing on those men whom I like the least, such as Alexander Hamilton, simply compare them to their counterparts today, the Bushes, Rostenkowskis, and Clintons! Surely there is no need to belabor the horrific contrast.

What the Founding Fathers did, then, in casting off the chains binding us to the British Empire, was to use their deep and broad insights into the history of nations, build on such British examples as Magna Carta and the Declaration of Rights, and create a uniquely decentralized polity of separate and sovereign states each delegating strictly limited powers to a federal government. Each of the state governments, as well as the federal government, had its power chained down by constitutions and bills of rights, insuring that power remained in the hands of the people themselves. Any government power was to be kept on the local level, as close to the people as possible, and the only function of government was to secure the property rights of the governed. Not the least, of course, the rights of the people against the government itself.

What about the famed "separation of church and state," a phrase which never appears in the founding documents? The point of this idea was not the absurd and fanatically secularist notion of insuring at all costs that there be no prayer in the public schools; indeed, only the New England Puritans and Unitarians were interested in having any public schools at all. What the Founding Fathers realized is that any overarching big government is apt to impose a state church and thereby transcend the vital religious checks and limits on state power—as the Byzantine Empire and later Czarist Russia were able to do with the Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe. And even though there was no longer a single Christian church as there had been in pre-Reformation Europe, there were many Protestant sects in America, and the Founding Fathers were anxious to ensure that the federal government never established one of them to be the official State Church of America. Hence, the First Amendment, which of course was supposed to apply only to the federal government, and which wedded religious liberty to the absence of such an established Church. It is instructive to note, by the way, that a few of the states continued to have an established Church after the adoption of the Constitution, such as the Congregational Church in Connecticut, without being denounced by the libertarians of that day and without America falling apart.

Until the end of the 18th century, immigration into America was homogeneous, so that free institutions of the country, as well as its stated libertarian principles, were solidly grounded in a shared British tradition of language, customs, values, ideals, and religion. *Then*, as David Hackett Fischer points out, when non-British immigrants began to pour in during the 19th century, largely from Ireland, Germany, and Scandinavia, these nationalities could and did adapt themselves to those British customs and institutions: not just to the English language, which was critical, but also to the values, principles, and institutions as stated in the founding American documents as well as to the unstated but equally important traditions inherited from Britain. This assimilation process worked astoundingly well. Even when non-British groups poured in from other parts of Europe in large numbers, and even when there was friction and resistance, especially in the shock to Protestants of Catholic immigration, the adaptation process worked with remarkable speed and thoroughness. Even when larger numbers arrived in what was termed the "new immigration" from Eastern and Southern Europe at the close of the 19th century, the process continued to work well.

I remember our family physician telling me about his first trip to London, about how much it meant to him to see the Houses of Parliament, what he referred to as "our heritage." Even though his personal ancestry was far from Britain and his parents were immigrants from *Eastern* Europe, he said this in absolute sincerity and without a trace of irony. As for my own immigrant father and myself, he and we had become "Americans" in our heart and soul, and of course Britain and its traditions and institutions were the foundation of America's and therefore of "our" heritage.

We used to talk about what it meant to be "an American." We used to say these words proudly, and they had a deep meaning. But the very concept of being "an American" has been lost. What does "American" *mean* nowadays, except to be born on American territory, to be entitled to welfare benefits, or to be subject to American taxes? Think, for example, of the response should some foolhardy congressman now propose the reestablishment of a House Committee on Un-American Activities. Hysteria would pour in on him from all the pundits and media elites, and he would be instantly denounced as racist, sexist, xenophobic, homophobic, fascist, and any other smear epithet that might be ready at hand. But the problem lies deeper: Who would even know what he was talking about? How could we possibly know what the word "un-American" meant if we have even lost the knowledge of what an "American" is supposed to be?

When my father came to this country in 1910, he knew not a word of English and had no money. All he had was the burning determination to "become an American." What that meant for him was not unusual at the time, although he perhaps pursued the goal with more consistency than many of his

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fellows. He was determined, in the first place, not only to learn English, but to abandon his Old World culture and read only this new language. He was in that way able to purge himself of any foreign accent. Although he arrived penniless, he worked his way through a private college, paying tuition with never a thought about seeking government handouts. That idea was anathema to all of this generation. He then became a chemist and a successful corporate executive. Never did he succumb to modern victimology; he would have considered such whining as reprehensible, evil, indeed "un-American."

Being "an American," then, meant to my father, and to most other Americans of his and earlier generations, being committed to certain core principles: respect for private property, hard work, thrift, freedom of enterprise, and a government that was strictly limited, confined basically to keeping criminals in line. These ideas of Americanism were not, of course, worked out systematically or in the trappings of high political theory, either by my father or by most Americans. They were ingrained, core, fundamental beliefs, beliefs deep in their bones.

This lack of a systematic theoretical conception of Americanism was both a strength and a weakness. It was a strength precisely because it was habitual, instinctive, deeply rooted. But it was a weakness because it left the American public open to attack in recent times by cunning and sophisticated intellectuals who, "subversive" in the deepest and truest sense, are able to challenge and to undermine this structure of beliefs and practices that had wrought our beloved America.

For this marvelous "Americanism," these ideas and customs and their instantiated institutions and practices, brought about the Old Republic, the sweet land of liberty that we knew and loved, the freest, the most prosperous, the most glorious nation on earth, the nation whose passing we mourn today. When we sang the old patriotic hymns, we meant every word, even when, as in the case of my family physician, this fervor might seem misplaced to a cynic. Yes, even when we sang

Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrim's pride.

"Freedom's holy light" may be dimming, along with what it means to be "an American," but so long as we can recover and celebrate the memory of America's glory and how it came into being, we can live in hope that some day it will shine brightly once again. ©

The O.J. Simpson Trial

by Gail White

If you're reading this in fifty years, or a hundred,
you won't know what I'm talking about. You've forgotten
who O.J. Simpson was, just as you've forgotten
those other atrocities of the 20th century:
Fatty Arbuckle raping a starlet with a lump of ice,
Ruth Snyder bashing her husband's skull with a sash weight—
There was a trial for you! In '29
The papers couldn't get enough of it. Judd Gray,
the hapless corset salesman, Ruth Snyder's lover,
gave evidence that hanged her higher than Haman—
how she was the vampire spider to his fly,
the mastermind of the sash weight. He was as limp
as cooked spaghetti in her hands. He told the truth
at last, and like twin eggs they fried in the chair.

That's trivia now, and time will trivialize
the Zodiac Killer and Kennedy's assassin,
Charlie Manson, Richard Speck and the nurses,
Jeffrey Dahmer and his kettle of simmering hearts.
The old sage lied who said you could gain immortal
fame by killing the greatest man of your time.
What lesson here? The old one of earthly vanity—
how the memory of every atrocity fades with time,
and but for Euripides we'd have long forgotten
Medea and the banality of her murders.

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Our Classical Roots

by E. Christian Kopff

H. Ward Sherett

On January 6, 1816, Thomas Jefferson wrote a letter to his state legislator, Colonel Charles Yancey. As we might expect, Jefferson's letter contains reflections of general interest on many topics, ranging in this case from the dangers of a large public debt and paper money to the advantages of beer over whiskey. Near the end Jefferson mentions his support for the legislature's paying for roads and schools, but regrets that government does such a better job building roads than maintaining schools. (How things have changed!) He goes on to say, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." This sentence is often quoted nowadays in support of greater tax support for America's public schools, perhaps not very legitimately. We know what Jefferson wanted schools to teach from his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Query 14, and public schools today do not provide that education.

The first level is to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. Children at that age are too young to be reading the Bible, Jefferson thought, but "their memories may here be stored with the most useful facts from Grecian, Roman, European, and American history." Like William Kilpatrick, Jefferson believed that "the first elements of morality" should be taught in elementary school and his explanation of what he meant by morality indicates that he would have shared Kilpatrick's lack of patience with Values Clarification curricula. Jefferson destined the next level, for children from eight to sixteen, "for teaching Greek, Latin, geography and the higher branches of numerical arithmetic." Jefferson had observed what has been often confirmed: that in the years before puberty children have wonderful memories and, "the learning of languages being chiefly a work of memory," schools should teach "the most useful languages ancient and modern." Jefferson ranked Greek and Latin chief among these useful languages. "The learning of Greek and Latin, I am told, is going into disuse in Europe. I know not what their manners and occupations may call for: but it would be very ill-judged in us to follow their example in this instance." Jefferson was no conservative. His chief commitments were to freedom and creativity, democracy and science. He understood that democracy and science exist among us as traditions that go back to the ancient world, traditions that have to be learned by hard work and study and that a mastery of the languages that helped form and shape those traditions is essential for success in keeping them alive.

This view was not an eccentricity of Thomas Jefferson. When John Stuart Mill was elected honorary president of St. Andrews, the inaugural address he delivered on February 1, 1867, presented the arguments for a university education that concentrated on science, mathematics, Greek, and Latin. Like Jefferson, Mill was no conservative. Like Jefferson he was committed to a future where progress was founded on self-government and technology based on science. Like Jefferson, he understood that access to the traditions that keep self-government and science alive depends on knowledge of the languages that preserve those traditions. Two generations later, in 1931, Albert Jay Nock delivered the Page Barbour Lectures at the University of Virginia as *The Theory of Education in the United States*. A deep student of Thomas Jefferson, Nock had been the beneficiary of a Jeffersonian education, as he reveals in his classic *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*. Nock was a libertarian, and he understood that the traditions of liberty and individual-

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ism could only be kept alive and creative by those who had worked hard to learn those traditions and then live in them and by them.

I do not suppose that many will deny that science represents a difficult and demanding discipline which requires hard work and a long apprenticeship. That is one reason why America's graduate schools are filled with foreigners and why, for example, only 40 percent of the engineering degrees granted by America's Colleges of Engineering in 1990 went to American citizens. Even the Americans who do receive higher degrees in science and technology are monoglot ignoramuses. (The last educated generation of Americans was graduated in the late 1960's.) When it was discovered a few years ago that nearly 20 percent of the research on a multiyear, multimillion-dollar research project on breast cancer, directed by Professor Bernard Fischer of the University of Pittsburgh, was fraudulent, one of the excuses for the years of delay in reporting the malfeasance was that the work had been done by a French Canadian, Dr. Roger Poisson, and since he published in French, they found it hard to check his results.

The traditions of self-government, like the traditions of science, date back to ancient Greece, to the fifth and sixth centuries before Christ, and those traditions are just as rigorous and demanding. "The functionaries of every government have propensities to command at will the liberty and property of their constituents," Jefferson wrote to Colonel Yancey. "There is no safe deposit for these but with the people themselves; nor can they be safe with them without information." Where did the pleasing notion arise that liberty is a spontaneous growth, that will appear without effort as long as it is not positively suppressed by tyrant or bureaucrat?

In the first generation of the Republic, the French immigrant who called himself Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur proclaimed this easy doctrine in his famous book *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782). "What then is the American, this new man? He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater." Peter Brimelow revealed from his own experience the modern version of this vision. An immigrant comes to the United States, gets a job, studies for a few months, and, once a federal judge has waved his magic wand over him, he is told that "he is as good an American as those who have lived their whole lives here." De Crèvecoeur is quite explicit about the kind of human being who is so easily transmogrified into an American. "Men are like plants. . . . We are nothing but what we derive from the air we breathe, the climate we inhabit, the government we obey, the system of religion we profess, and the nature of our employment." He had already explained quite bluntly, "*Ubi panis, ibi patria* is the motto of all emigrants . . . his country is now that which gives him land, bread, protection, and consequence."

Two generations later another Frenchman came to America, Alexis de Tocqueville. Tocqueville was not only wise but educated, and he had no intention of settling in America. He said the United States "possessed two of the main causes of internal peace; it was a new country, but it was inhabited by a people grown old in the exercise of freedom."

There is no more important insight to be found in a work replete with important insights. Europeans did not know of the New World until 1492, but the people who settled here had left behind none of "their ancient prejudices and manners." They brought their traditions and their education with them, Anglo-Saxon and classical. The grammar to be taught in the schools that Jefferson wanted for Virginia was Greek and Latin grammar. For him, American freedom was a restoration on new soil of "the ancient Saxon laws." When he taught at the University of Virginia, Jefferson did not teach Public Policy like a modern politician. He taught Anglo-Saxon. This decision was not due to the newborn conservatism of a retired politician. On August 13, 1776, the same year he penned the Declaration of Independence, he wrote to Edmund Pendleton, "Has not every restoration of the ancient Saxon laws had happy effects? Is it not better now that we return at once to that happy system of our ancestors, the wisest and most perfect ever yet devised by the wit of man?"

The Founders of the American Republic understood that their mission was to recreate in a new environment, to continue in their own way the traditions they had inherited from the past. Science and democracy are not the only ancient traditions. There are also philosophy and history and philology. Christianity itself was born, like Jesus, in the classical past, and its sacred texts survive in languages spoken and written on the shores of the Mediterranean two millennia ago. The future most Americans want will not be a spontaneous growth. It involves entering into challenging and demanding disciplines that can be practiced best by those able to master the difficult languages that preserve them, Greek, Latin, and mathematics.

It is hard for Americans to accept the idea that participating in creativity and progress means participating in traditions, not to mention participation in traditions that are thousands of years old. We want to believe that we did it our way. The aspect of multiculturalism that is most sympathetic to American ears is the notion that our society and its values are "socially constructed," due to human choice and subject to human review and revision. Just as we walk through our supermarkets, filing past aisle after aisle of breakfast cereals and toothpaste to choose from, so we can choose our lifestyles, our religion, our system of values, our form of government. Well, maybe not our form of government. That has to be democratic, of course.

Few Americans ever reach that sure marker of maturity, the realization that we are the creation of forces and events we never choose. To begin with, we did not choose our parents. That means we did not choose our genes, or our environment for the nine months following conception, or our life for the years following birth. Experts can predict the broad outlines of a child's life when the youngster is two with more accuracy than we usually get from weather reports, at least in the Rocky Mountain area. Regarding culture, we also did not choose our first language. If that language is English, it was not our choice that serious discourse in many important areas, including law, politics, ethics, the physical and humane sciences, to mention a few, is conducted in a vocabulary that is heavily Latinate, with a large contribution from Greek. It is a short step from realizing the formative power of language to understanding that many important activities in our society involve participation in traditions that go back to the Ancient World, activities that range from science to civil disobedience. A little attention shows that these and many other activities are best and most creatively performed by those who know the shaping origins as well as the latest slice of the cutting edge. Of course, we may refuse to participate, but even that choice is limited.

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How often a teacher hears students proclaiming that they are not going to be like their parents. Many teenagers do look very different from their middle-aged folks. Like the late Sam Cook in the popular rock-and-roll priamel, they don't know much about geometry or about the French they took, but they do know that they are free to choose. By the time they have reached the middle of life's path, to quote another poem from the canon, they may look one morning into the mirror and see how impossible, how quintessentially childish, is the desire to escape their origins. No one can choose his genes, although he may make wise or foolish use of what they afford him. We can no more choose our culture and its languages, although we may refuse to take advantage of what they can give us. A trendy academic recently urged his peers to make a careful selection among what he called our "cultural baggage." The metaphor has a certain piquancy. We should not deceive ourselves, however. If our culture and its traditions are baggage, we are not carrying it, or paying academic redcaps to haul it behind us. It is carrying us.

The regime that now rules the United States believes that it can stay in power by keeping its subjects enthralled in ignorance and importing educated folk from Europe to maintain its complicated machinery and poor folk from Asia and Latin America to do its scut work. Both the regime and its subjects may soon learn what does arise spontaneously for those who will not learn the difficult lessons of the past: hunger, violence, chaos, and entropy. Those who will not learn the lessons of Jefferson and Mill are condemned to repeat the fall of civilization. "The hardest thing in politics," writes Régis Debray, "what distinguishes the statesman from the politician, is to want the consequences of what you want." If we want self-esteem and multiculturalism, then we need to learn to want the ethnic wars and cultural ghettoes that are their consequences. If we want self-rule and science, then we need to learn to want the hard work and the mental discipline necessary to maintain and use the mental infrastructure transmitted to us by the classical tradition. If we choose that future, we shall live every day in the shadow of our superiors, but in return we and our children will once again have access to our heritage of freedom and creativity. ◁c▷

The Stages of Forgetting

by Gail White

Wanting Him Back

Fantasy: He returns, carrying roses.
He's so apologetic he could weep.
He loves you best. He begs you to forgive him.
You buy it. Maybe he's not *such* a creep.

Wanting Him Dead

Fantasy: He goes fishing, falls in, drowns.
A bus runs over him. It kills her too.
Or maybe you could get away with murder:
Brain him with lamb chops. Afterwards, make stew.

Transcendence

Reality: You find that you can cover
the entire bed. You don't need him to work
the VCR. And what a lousy lover
he was! You smile, and then forget the jerk.

Unfortunately, nothing you can do
will zap you right past stages One and Two.

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America's Christian Heritage

by Harold O.J. Brown

H Ward Sterett

The phrase "America's Christian Heritage" might irritate any hearers who do not want to be classed as members of the tribe that first received its name in Antioch (Acts 11:26). But wait: we recognize that one does not have to be a member of the family to be remembered in a will, nor be of the same name, or even of the same race, as one's predecessors in order to receive an inheritance from them.

One need not be a professing Christian, or even merely a generic or nominal Christian, to have received and benefited from what we call America's Christian heritage. Of course, I should be less than candid if I did not say to each of you, as Paul did to Agrippa, when that King told him, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds" (Acts 26:29). At the time, Agrippa would have had to convert and declare himself a Christian in order to enjoy the benefits that Paul promised believers: there was no Christian heritage. Today the situation is different. Our largely Christian predecessors in this country have left us quite a heritage, one that we need not be Christian to enjoy, provided we do not as biblical Esau did and disdain our birthright for a mess of politically correct secular pottage. To dispense with allegory and speak directly, let me say that the Christianity of the past, whatever its failings, has left for us in late second-millennium America a valuable heritage, which we would be very unwise to squander.

In the United States at the present time, we are experiencing a kind of war of attrition against the Christian inheritance. There is a rather direct war being waged against certain Christian bodies and institutions, specifically those belonging or accused of belonging to the religious right. This war will be damaging to the United States, but the damage will be suffered primarily by those bodies and institutions directly attacked. The war of attrition, which is wearing down the social structures and institutions that derive, more or less directly, from Christianity without themselves being "church," will ultimately damage everyone—except those who prefer the guidance of tyranny to the responsibilities of freedom.

Attacks on the Christian heritage may be made in temperate language and come from well-respected quarters, such as the *New York Times*. For less temperate attacks, one does not have to look or listen far, no farther than one's radio, where the proliferating talk show hosts seem also to intensify their hostility and vituperation day by day. In Chicago, one of the least temperate is a certain Jay Marvin. In one recent program, he aggressively responded to a hearer who mumbled something about the importance of preserving Christian values. "Why do you think the first settlers came to America?" Mr. Marvin demanded. "Why? Why? To escape religious persecution, that's why." By implication—not such a subtle implication—Marvin accused anyone speaking out in favor of the Christian tradition or Christian values of an inclination to religious persecution. Indeed, implicit in the argument is a silent equation, religion equals religious persecution. Proclaiming himself Jewish, Mr. Marvin evidently wanted to wrap himself in the mantle of a persecuted minority. This tactic is effective (and safe), however, only when the minority really is not all that persecuted. It is natural enough for Jews to be displeased with evangelism or proselytization that attempts to persuade them to accept Jesus, the Christians' Messiah, as their own. However, when this sensitivity to anything resembling persecution goes too far, in other words, so far that it would deny to all of society anything and everything that bears a Christian tinge, it begins to eat away at the ground on which the objector himself stands, for the freedom and liberty he enjoys is partly based on the biblical understandings that have become part of our national ethos through

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the Christians who brought them to these shores.

As a Jew, Marvin has inherited from his Jewish predecessors a tradition of values and morals that differs hardly at all from the Christian values against which he spoke. Therefore the question arises: Is the objection to the label "Christian," or to the values themselves? It may be that the encounter with Christianity has been so unpleasant for some people and for some groups that merely to affix the label "Christian" on an idea or a principle is enough to cause it to be rejected. This is especially unfortunate when the idea is something that is very useful or even necessary for the health of society and has been brought to these shores primarily by representatives of European, and therefore Christian, civilization. The suspicion is strong, verging on certainty, that this particular talk show host, like many others in our society, really rejects the values themselves and only makes use of the label to attack them.

How has it become possible in America to attack certain basic values, values that most human societies throughout history have considered vital? It has become possible because Christians and Christianity have rendered themselves so odious, at least in the sight of some, or have been declared so odious that anything they touch is regarded with distaste, as fit to be suppressed or discarded. The word "Christian" has become a bad word in politically correct America. If a thing—or a person—can effectively be labeled "Christian," he or it has been rendered unclean, and can be banished from the community without further explanation.

Consider the implications: "Christian" has become a bad word in a society that is still at least in some sense about 70 percent Christian. What are the implications when two-thirds to three-quarters of the people of a nation are led to think that they have no good excuse for existing, or at least no excuse for being what they are? There is a parallel in that "white" is a bad word in a society that is about 70 percent white (not the same 70 percent, of course). Incidentally, "male" is a bad word in a society that is, from the nature of things, about half male. Does any sports team ever win victories by constantly telling its members that they are cowardly, unsportsmanlike, weak, and lazy? If 70 percent of a particular society are constantly told—and tell themselves, ultimately coming to take it for granted—that they owe their existence and their prosperity to crimes and malfeasance of various kinds, will they not inevitably come to think of themselves as criminals and malefactors? And will this not sap their ability to aspire to virtue and to accomplish virtuous deeds? We are rascals and wretches, and no good can come of us. Curiously, one of the features of this rascal-and-wretch doctrine is that we are taught to apply it selectively to ourselves and to exempt others.

Of course Christianity, too, has a low view of man as he is. It has often been attacked for its doctrine of original sin, which asserts that humanity chose rebellion against God in the infancy of the race and continues to perpetuate it year by year, making us all "by nature children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3). This might appear to be a very pessimistic view, and indeed it is, if it is combined with a materialistic worldview. We notice, however, that it is not selective, but applies to all humans, to generic man—men, women, and children. No race dare single itself out as racially special, but no race need regard itself as racially lost. Christianity, properly understood (as it frequently has *not* been in nominally Christian nations), will prevent a race or a nation from exalting itself above others, but it will also warn it against debasing itself beneath them. In addition, and very importantly, Christianity, with all that it says about the reality of human sin and corruption, does not leave us there. Instead, it goes on to tell its adherents, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10). Christianity is far from unfamiliar with human frailty and human sinfulness—in fact, it is often accused of exaggerating them, but it is also full of hope. What is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews of the people of the church is also true in a very significant way of the people who came to these shores: they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one (Hebrews 11:13-16).

The confidence that they could find and build a better country here on earth was in large measure a consequence of the fact that they had before them the vision of the ultimate city, "a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). It is no accident that as much of America, and foremost many of our intellectual and political leaders and opinion-makers, lose the vision of that City, and seek to make the perfect city themselves, we come to disparage more and more man and his works that we have done. This is what the late Dutch Christian philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd called "the twilight of Western thought," based on "pretended autonomy." Thinking, or pretending, that we can do perfectly well without divine guidance, we gradually come to the conclusion that we have done perfectly badly up until now, and that no good thing can be expected of us.

A society that loses its *élan vital*, its enthusiasm for life, or perhaps not merely its active will, but even its passive willingness to live, is hardly likely to survive. The threat to the survival of a largely Christian people such as ours does not lie with the animus of the small number of secularists and militant anti-Christians, but with the gullibility and lack of self-respect of the 70 percent or so of us who in some way bear the name of Christian, and who seem more and more inclined to apologize for the fact that we exist, and even to promise to stop existing as soon as we comfortably can. By so apologizing, those of us who are Christians not merely discard the heritage with all that it can do for us, but also render it inaccessible to the others who, without being Christian in name or in conviction, might otherwise have profited from it. If the Christian heritage in America is lost, it will not be because there is a small if substantial minority of non-Christians who wish that it did not exist (we must not overlook the fact that many non-Christians do not object to the heritage), but because there are so many Christians who have become first ashamed and then ignorant of it.

The survival of a healthy society is important for all Americans. For this reason, it is important that no one and no group—whether they be militant secularists, victims of Christian prejudice and maltreatment, or pusillanimous Christians, be allowed to squander or spoil the inheritance.

Are we or were we in the United States ever in any sense a "Christian nation"? Actually, to ask it in this way is to ask incorrectly, for the expression "the United States" originally designated not a nation but a confederation of states, originally sovereign, and remaining sovereign for several decades, at least in theory, if not in practice. The answer is this: the United States, or America if you prefer, have never been *prescriptively*

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Christian, at least not since the Constitution, but they were and to a large extent still are *descriptively* Christian. Christianity in the large sense—not Christian doctrine as such, but the civilization that has grown up in the context of Christian teaching and Christian life—is so interwoven into the whole social and indeed human fabric of the United States that it cannot be cut out, and certainly not ripped out, without destroying the entire fabric. Jesus said, citing the Old Testament, or the Hebrew Scriptures if you prefer, "Thou shalt love they neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:39, citing Leviticus 19:18). When we refuse to listen to him saying that, because his words are transmitted to us by Christians, and we separate Church from State, we also forget the antecedent commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:12), also taught us by Christians (and by many others). Now we have ten- and eleven-year-old children dropping a five-year-old from a 14th-floor window to his death on the pavement below. Let it not be said that Eric Morse was dropped because the Supreme Court, some years ago, ruled that the Ten Commandments may not be posted on school walls, and, earlier this year, that they may not even appear in courtrooms. But let it be said that a society that will not listen to anything that Christians have transmitted because it is "religious" will not long be immune to the consequences.

The 13 original colonies that began a seven-year war for independence in 1776 were all by nature and history Christian. The varieties of Christianity differed from one region to another, but each of them was at least as Christian as, indeed more so than, the European mother country or countries from which their people came. To say, as so many do, that the colonists came here to escape religious persecution is to obscure the issue: it seems almost to imply that religious authorities in the "mother country," primarily England, were persecuting freethinkers, secularists, agnostics, and atheists and that they all fled to America. (It is not too plausible to suggest that England was persecuting Jews or Muslims, for those groups would have been readily identifiable, and there were very few of them in the 13 colonies.) To a considerable extent, the colonists came because they wanted to exercise their religion not merely freely but vigorously, but had not been able to do so in the country or countries from which they came. As Oscar Handlin points out in his signal work *The Uprooted*, religion was a very vital and active force in every immigrant wave from the 17th century until the middle of the 20th. People may not have come specifically in order to practice their religion, but one of the very first things that the colonists and later immigrants did was to establish churches and schools to train clergy. Harvard College was established only 16 years into the history of New England in order to train the next generation of Puritan ministers. The influx of east Asian immigrants that followed the changes in immigration law in 1965 has also brought the establishment of Asian Christian churches, and there are now over 2,000 Korean Christian congregations in the United States. The idea that people came to get away from religion is absurd. The idea of a secular state was virtually nonexistent in 1787, the year that the Constitution was adopted, as it had been in 1776. "To read the Constitution as the charter for a secular state is to misread history, and to misread it radically. The Constitution was designed to *perpetuate* a Christian order." From the earliest colonial days to the present, immigrants brought their churches with them. In several of the colonies, as well as in the United States after independence, the immigrants definitely came in the hope of finding freedom to express their religious convictions and to live in accordance with the dictates of their faith.

As each of us knows, the United States Constitution, as interpreted and perverted by a succession of Supreme Courts, has been the means for secularizing America, and for driving religion in general, and Christianity in particular, to the fringes of society. A document that was once thought to protect a heritage is now, in the hands of judges and justices patterned on the judge of Luke 18:2, who "neither feared God nor regarded man," the means of destroying it. Time is running out, indeed, virtually has run out, and so I would like to end not by describing but—in true evangelical fashion—by sharing with you an important element of our Christian heritage, the three-point sermon. A proper preacher, not to say professor of theology, would develop each of these points painstakingly, perhaps painfully, but I shall confine myself to stating the three points that I think constitute a vital part of our Christian heritage: perspective, proportion, and priority.

To a considerable extent, the colonists came because they wanted to exercise their religion not merely freely but vigorously, but had not been able to do so in the country or countries from which they came.

Perspective. Did Jesus not recount the story of the rich fool, who boasted of all that he had laid up in his barns, that God said to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided? This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:20-21). Communism taught that men and women must suffer today for the Man of the future, but that Man, even if he were to come—and he has postponed his visit indefinitely—cannot repay them. The loss of the eternal perspective seems to tell us, for the moment, "Eat, Drink, and be Merry," but how does the saying end? "For tomorrow we die." The more we lose the awareness of the fact that death is not the end, the more death becomes the goal. An individual, a family, a nation where the eternal perspective is forgotten will ultimately have no higher goals than selfish desire, and no more heroic deeds than abortion and euthanasia.

Proportion. Jesus asked a rhetorical question, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

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(Matthew 16:26). Forty-odd years ago, when I was in high school, we were told that an article of America's faith was the infinite value of every human life. That was unbelievable; it was totally out of proportion. Only God is infinite. Today it has been inverted into its opposite, or even worse: not merely the zero value, but the negative value of every human life. Man—men and women—who lose sight of God may for a while think that their place is with divinity, but all too soon they come to find themselves among the demons. In 1962, when the Supreme Court was preparing to ban the reading of the Bible from public schools, the occult was widely held to be a foolish superstition. In 1994, a generation later, we see—on the verge of Halloween—that the occult is becoming an article of belief. O.J. Simpson, accused of a double murder, has become a folk hero, and both he and his alleged victims provide the material for Halloween celebrations in the schools, where no one dare mention a Commandment or sing a Christmas carol. The Psalmist said it well: "The wicked strut about on every side, when vileness is exalted among the sons of men" (12:8). We forget that, and disregard the Book from which it comes, at our peril. We are being told to forget it, at least to forget it officially, and we are in peril, not least from our officials.

Priority. We should certainly look at things from the right perspective, and keep them in proportion, but there must be something that is seen to come first. Perhaps it was not necessary to place "In God we trust" on our coinage and, under President Eisenhower, to add it to our banknotes. Perhaps it was not necessary to post the Ten Commandments on schoolroom walls, to have Nativity scenes in public places, to sing carols in schools, or even to say "Merry Christmas." These are not the Christian heritage: they are only fragmentary by-products. They are not necessarily unattractive or useless by-products, but little can be gained by fighting for them, or recovering them. Being fallible human beings, limited in knowledge, in strength, and in the ability to will what is good, we cannot build the City of God on earth. Being human, we need many things—food, drink, raiment, shelter—but the way to have what we need of them is not to put them first. Instead, heed these words, the last part of the heritage that I can mention today: the priority. "Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of these things [food, drink, raiment]. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

After

by Rudolph Schirmer

Will we be whistling to each other then,
Croaking through the treetops, saying,
Yonder lies the forest freehold,
And beyond it, fields afloat?

Will the wind no longer whip us
Now that night has come for good,
Nor the frost unduly nip us
More than strictures ever could?

Will the nightingale surprise us
As the lark so often did,
And purling serenades apprize us
Of a charmed Valladolid?

Or will the rasping note prevail
Until our ears acclaim discord
And we go down beneath a hail
Of atonalities abhorred?

Will our trained spirits fall to musing
On the vacant and the dead,
Or by more energetic choosing
Breed vitality instead?

Shall we go whispering to sleep
With no intention of reprise,
As if God had no word to keep,
No creed to bring us to our knees?

Will the strains our hearts were torn by
Echo through a sullen void
And the banners we had sworn by
Flutter loosely, undeployed?

Will our arrows, limply whizzing
Through the penetrable air,
Fall to earth in gentle shower,
With no power to impair?

Or will old weapons, newly wielded,
Still avail to daunt the foe,
And all our seignories be shielded
As when first we drew the bow?

Let us hope—for hope is cure—
That we retain the faculty
To nurse a vision clear and pure
Of all that we aspire to be.

Let us dream—for dreams avail—
That we concur, as children do,
In one transcendent fairy tale
Where all advertisement comes true.

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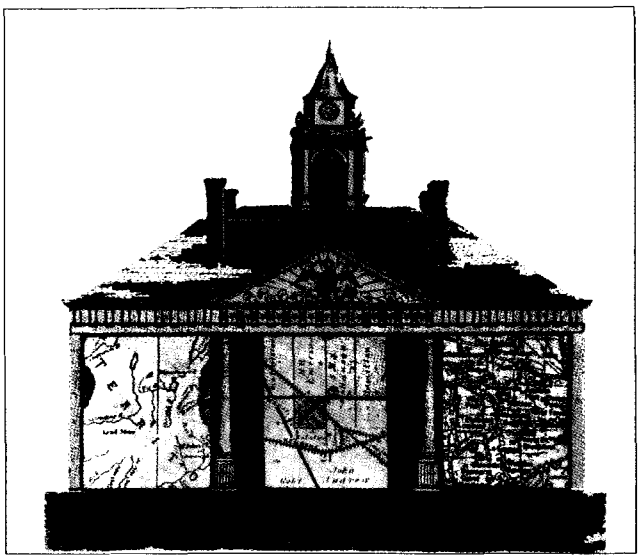
Free Immigration or Forced Integration?

by Hans-Hermann Hoppe



H. Ward Sterett

The classical argument in favor of free immigration runs as follows. Other things being equal, businesses go to low-wage areas, and labor moves to high-wage areas, thus effecting a tendency toward the equalization of wage rates (for the same kind of labor) as well as the optimal localization of capital. An influx of migrants into a high-wage area will lower nominal wage rates. However, it will not lower real wage rates if the population is below its optimum size (and surely the United States, as a whole, is well below its optimum size). To the contrary, if this is the case, the produced output will increase and real incomes will actually rise. Thus, restrictions on immigration will do greater harm to the protected domestic workers as consumers than whatever such restrictions might gain them as producers. Moreover, immigration restrictions will increase the "flight" of capital abroad (the export of capital which otherwise might have stayed), causing an equalization of wage rates (although somewhat more slowly) but leading to a less than optimal allocation of capital, thereby harming world living standards.

As stated above, the argument in favor of free immigration is irrefutable and correct. It would be as foolish to attack it as to deny that free trade leads to higher living standards than protectionism does. It would also be wrongheaded to attack the case for free immigration by pointing out that because of the existence of a welfare state, immigration has become, to a significant extent, the immigration of welfare-bums, who, even if the United States is below the optimal population point, do not increase but rather decrease average living standards. For this is not an argument against immigration but against the welfare state. To be sure, the welfare state should be destroyed, root and branch. However, the problems of immigration and welfare are analytically distinct problems, and they must be treated accordingly.

The problem with the above argument is that it suffers from two interrelated shortcomings which invalidate its unconditional pro-immigration conclusion and/or which render the argument applicable only to a highly unrealistic—long bygone situation—in human history.

The first shortcoming will only be touched upon. To libertarians of the Austrian school, it should be clear that what constitutes "wealth" (well-being) is subjective. Material welfare is not the only thing that counts. Even if real incomes rise because of immigration, it does not follow that immigration must be considered "good," for one might prefer lower living standards and a lower population over higher living standards and a denser population.

The second shortcoming will be the focus here. With regard to a given territory into which people immigrate, it is left unanalyzed who, if anyone, owns (controls) this territory. In fact, in order to render the above argument applicable, it is—implicitly—assumed that the territory in question is unowned, and that the immigrants enter virgin territory (open frontier). Obviously, this can no longer be assumed. If this assumption is dropped, however, the problem of immigration takes on an entirely new meaning and requires fundamental rethinking.

For the purpose of illustration, let us first assume an anarcho-capitalist society. Though convinced that such a society is the only social order that can be defended as just, I do not want to explain here why this is the case. Instead, I will employ it as a conceptual benchmark, because this will help clear up the fundamental misconception of most contemporary free immigration advocates.

All land is privately owned, including all streets, rivers, airports, harbors, etc. With respect to some pieces of land, the property title may be unrestricted; that is, the owner is permitted to do with his property whatever he pleases as long as he does not physically damage the property owned by others. With respect to other territories, the property title may be more or less severely restricted. As is currently the case in some housing developments, the owner may be bound by contractual limitations on what he can do with his property (voluntary zoning), which might include residential versus commercial use, no buildings more than four stories high, no sale or rent to Jews, Germans, Catholics, homosexuals, Haitians, families with or

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without children, or smokers, for example.

Clearly, under this scenario there is no such thing as freedom of immigration. Rather, there exists the freedom of many independent private property owners to admit or exclude others from their own properties in accordance with their own unrestricted or restricted property titles. Admission to some territories might be easy, while to others it might be nearly impossible; in any case, admission to the property of the admitting person does not imply a "freedom to move around," unless other property owners consent to such movements. There will be as much immigration or nonimmigration, inclusivity or exclusivity, desegregation or segregation, nondiscrimination or discrimination based on racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural, or whatever other grounds as individual owners or associations of individual owners allow.

Note that none of this, not even the most exclusive form of segregationism, has anything to do with a rejection of free trade and the adoption of protectionism. From the fact that one does not want to associate with or live in the neighborhood of blacks, Turks, etc., it does not follow that one does not want to trade with them from a distance. To the contrary, it is precisely the absolute voluntariness of human association and separation—the absence of any form of forced integration—that makes peaceful relationships—free trade—between culturally, racially, ethnically, or religiously distinct people possible.

In an anarcho-capitalist society there is no government and, accordingly, no clearcut distinction between inlanders (domestic citizens) and foreigners. This distinction comes into existence only with the establishment of a government, i.e., an institution which possesses a monopoly of aggression (taxation). The territory over which a government's taxing power extends becomes "inland," and everyone residing outside of this territory becomes a foreigner. State borders (and passports), as distinct from private property borders (and titles to property), are an "unnatural" (coercive) institution. Indeed, their existence (and that of a domestic government) implies a twofold distortion with respect to peoples' natural inclination to associate with others. First, inlanders cannot exclude the government (the taxman) from their own property, but are subject to what one might call "forced immigration" by government agents. Second, in order to be able to intrude on its subjects' private property so as to tax them, a government must invariably take control of existing roads, and it will employ its tax revenue to produce even more roads to gain even better access to all private property, as a potential tax source. Thus, this overproduction of roads does not involve merely an innocent facilitation of interregional trade—a lowering of transaction costs—as starry-eyed economists would have us believe; it involves forced domestic integration (artificial desegregation of separate localities).

Moreover, with the establishment of a government and state borders, immigration takes on an entirely new meaning. Immigration becomes immigration by foreigners across state borders, and the decision as to whether a person should be admitted no longer rests with private property owners or associations of such owners but with the government as the ultimate sovereign of all domestic residents and the ultimate owner of all their properties. Now, if the government excludes a person while even one domestic resident wants to admit this very person onto his property, the result is forced exclusion (a phenomenon that does not exist under private property anarchism). Furthermore, if the government admits a person while there is not even one domestic resident who wants to have this person on his property, the result is forced integration (also nonexistent under private property anarchism).

Now add a few "realistic" empirical assumptions. Let us assume that the government is privately owned. The ruler literally owns the entire country within its borders. He owns parts of the territory outright (his property title is unrestricted), and he is partial owner of the rest (as landlord or residual claimant of all of his citizen-tenants' real estate holdings, albeit restricted by some kind of preexisting rental contract). He can sell and bequeath his property, and he can calculate and "realize" the monetary value of his capital (his country).

Traditional monarchies—and kings—are the closest historical examples of this form of government. What will a king's typical immigration and emigration policy be? Because he owns the entire country's capital value, he will, assuming no more than his self-interest, tend to choose migration policies that preserve or enhance rather than diminish the value of his kingdom. As far as emigration is concerned, a king will want to prevent the emigration of productive subjects, in particular of his best and most productive subjects, because losing them would lower the value of the kingdom. For example, from 1782 until 1824, a law prohibited the emigration of skilled workmen from Britain. On the other hand, a king will want to expel his nonproductive and destructive subjects (criminals, bums, beggars, gypsies, vagabonds, etc.), for their removal from his territory would increase the value of his realm. For this reason Britain expelled tens of thousands of common criminals to North America and Australia.

On the other hand, as far as immigration is concerned, a king would want to keep out the mob, as well as all people of inferior productive capabilities. People of the latter category would only be admitted temporarily, if at all, as seasonal workers without citizenship rights (as when large numbers of Poles were hired as seasonal workers in Germany after 1880), and they would be barred from permanent property ownership. A king would only permit the permanent immigration of superior or at least above-average people (i.e., those whose residence in his kingdom would increase his own property value), as when after 1685 (with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes) tens of thousands of Huguenots were permitted to settle in Prussia and when Peter the Great, Frederick the Great, and Maria Theresa promoted the immigration and settlement of large numbers of Germans in Russia, Prussia, and the eastern provinces of Austria-Hungary. In brief, while through his migration policies a king might not entirely avoid all cases of forced exclusion or forced integration, such policies would by and large do the same as what private property owners would do, if they could decide whom to admit and whom to exclude. The king would be highly selective and very much concerned about improving the quality of the resident human capital so as to drive property values up, not down.

Migration policies become predictably different once the government is publicly owned. The ruler no longer owns the country's capital value, but only has current use of it. He cannot sell or bequeath his position as ruler; he is merely a temporary caretaker. Moreover, "free entry" into the position of a caretaker government exists. Anyone can, in principle, become the ruler of the country.

Democracies as they came into existence on a worldwide scale after World War I offer historical examples of public gov-

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ernment. Once again, assuming no more than self-interest (maximizing monetary and psychic income: money and power), democratic rulers tend to maximize current income, which they can appropriate privately, at the expense of capital values, which they cannot appropriate privately. Hence, in accordance with democracy's inherent egalitarianism of one-man one-vote, they tend to pursue a distinctly egalitarian—nondiscriminatory—policy of emigration and immigration.

As far as emigration policy is concerned, this implies that for a democratic ruler it makes little, if any, difference whether productive or unproductive people, geniuses or bums, leave the country. They all have one equal vote. In fact, democratic rulers might well be more concerned about the loss of a bum than that of a productive genius. While the loss of the latter would obviously lower the capital value of the country and the loss of the former might actually increase it, a democratic ruler does not own the country. In the short run, the bum voting in favor of egalitarian measures might be more valuable to a democratic leader than the productive genius, who as egalitarianism's prime victim will more likely vote against the democratic ruler. For the same reason, a democratic ruler, quite unlike a king, undertakes little to expel those people whose presence within the country constitutes a negative externality (human trash, which drives individual property values down). In fact, such negative externalities—unproductive parasites, bums, and criminals—are likely to be his most reliable voters.

As far as immigration policies are concerned, the incentives and disincentives are likewise distorted, and the results are equally perverse. For a democratic ruler, it also matters little whether bums or geniuses, below- or above-average civilized and productive people immigrate into the country. Nor is he much concerned about the distinction between temporary workers (owners of work permits) and permanent, property-owning immigrants (naturalized citizens). In fact, bums and unproductive people may well be preferable as residents and citizens because they cause more so-called "social problems," and democratic rulers thrive on the existence of such problems. Moreover, bums and inferior people will likely support his egalitarian policies, whereas geniuses and superior people will not. The result of this policy of nondiscrimination is forced integration: the forcing of masses of inferior immigrants onto domestic property owners who, if they could have decided for themselves, would have sharply discriminated and chosen very different neighbors for themselves. Thus, the United States immigration laws of 1965, as the best available example of democracy at work, eliminated all formerly existing "quality" concerns and the explicit preference for European immigrants and replaced them with a policy of almost complete nondiscrimination (multiculturalism).

Indeed, though rarely noticed, the immigration policy of a democracy is the mirror image of its policy toward internal population movements: toward voluntary association and dissociation, segregation and desegregation, and the physical distancing and approximating of various private property owners. Like a king, a democratic ruler will promote spatial overintegration by overproducing the "public good" of roads. However, for a democratic ruler, unlike a king, it will not be sufficient that everyone can move next door to anyone else on government roads. Concerned about his current income and power rather than capital values and constrained by egalitarian sentiments, a democratic ruler will tend to go even further. Through nondiscrimination laws—one cannot discriminate against Jews, blacks, homosexuals, etc.—the government will want to open even the physical access and entrance to everyone's property to everyone else. Thus, it is hardly surprising that the civil rights legislation in the United States, which outlawed domestic discrimination on the basis of color, race, national origin, etc., and which thereby mandated desegregation, coincided with the adoption of a nondiscriminatory immigration policy, meaning mandated international desegregation (forced integration).

The current situation in the United States and in Western Europe has nothing whatsoever to do with "free" immigration. It is forced integration, plain and simple, and forced integration is the predictable outcome of democratic, one-man one-vote rule. Abolishing forced integration requires a dedemocratization of society, and ultimately the abolition of democracy. More specifically, the authority to admit or exclude should be stripped from the hands of the central government and reassigned to the states, provinces, cities, towns, villages, residential districts, and ultimately to private property owners and their voluntary associations. The means to achieve this goal are decentralization and secession (both inherently undemocratic and unmajoritarian). One would thereby be well on the way toward a restoration of the freedom of association and exclusion as it is implied in the idea and institution of private property, and much of the social strife currently caused by forced integration would disappear if only towns and villages could and would do what they did as a matter of course until well into the 19th century in Europe and the United States: to post signs regarding entrance requirements to the town (no beggars or bums or homeless, but also no Muslims or Jews or Catholics or Protestants or Americans); to kick out as trespassers anyone who does not fulfill the town's requirements; and to solve the "naturalization" question somewhat along the Swiss model, where local assemblies, not the central government, determine who can and cannot become a Swiss citizen.

What should one hope for and advocate as the relatively correct immigration policy, as long as the democratic central state is still in place and successfully arrogates the power to determine a uniform national immigration policy? The best one may hope for, even if it goes against the "nature" of a democracy and thus is not very likely to happen, is that the democratic rulers act as if they were the personal owners of the country, as if they had to decide whom to include and whom to exclude from their own personal property (into their very own houses). This means following a policy of utmost discrimination: of strict discrimination in favor of the human qualities of skill, character, and cultural compatibility.

More specifically, it means distinguishing strictly between "citizens" (naturalized immigrants) and "resident aliens" and excluding the latter from all welfare entitlements. It means requiring, for resident alien status as well as for citizenship, the personal sponsorship by a resident citizen and his assumption of liability for all property damage caused by the immigrant. It implies requiring an existing employment contract with a resident citizen; moreover, for both categories, but especially that of citizenship, it implies that all immigrants must demonstrate not only (English) language proficiency but all-around superior (above-average) intellectual performance and character qualities compatible with our system of values—with the predictable result of a systematic pro-European immigration bias. c

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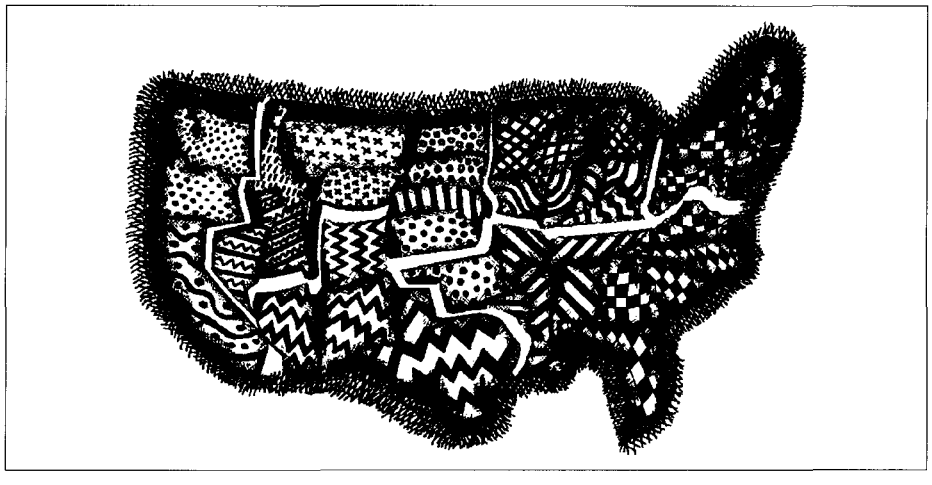
Alien Future

by Paul Craig Roberts

"A nation scattered and peeled, . . . a nation meted out and trodden down."
—Isaiah



H. Ward Sterett

Alien Nation: Common Sense About America's Immigration Disaster
by Peter Brimelow
New York: Random House;
291 pp., $23.00

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Like Romans in ancient times, Americans are losing their country to immigration, and few seem to know it. One who does know is Peter Brimelow, himself an immigrant and recently naturalized citizen. In his book *Alien Nation*, he more or less predicts that immigration is undermining social cohesiveness and has the United States on the road to breakup. Four separate regions are emerging: an Asian Pacific coast, an Hispanic southwest, a black and white southeast and northeast, and a white landlocked center. Among the culprits in the smashing of the once-fabled melting pot are the 1965 Immigration Act, uncontrolled illegal immigration, a continuous stream of immigrants without pause for assimilation, politically correct multiculturalism, which has redefined assimilation as "racist," support systems and race-based legal privileges for "protected minorities" that have made group identity more valuable than assimilation, and the denial of dangers posed by all of the above by experts and intellectuals across the political and ideological spectrum.

The 1965 Immigration Act abolished national origin as the basis for immigration. The national origin basis helped the melting pot to function by admitting people based on cultural ties. These are the very people whom the 1965 act discriminates against, and ever since then Europeans have been crowded out by Hispanics, Asians, and blacks. Proponents of the 1965 act gave firm assurances that it would neither raise the level of immigration nor affect the ethnic mix. For example, Senator Edward Kennedy, the bill's floor manager, stated categorically that "under the proposed bill, the present level of immigration remains substantially the same" and that "the ethnic mix of this country will not be upset." His brother Robert testified that the total effect of the bill on Asian immigration would be 5,000 more immigrants the first year, "after which immigration from that source would virtually disappear." The real number, Brimelow notes, has proved to be 1,129.7 times greater. Representative Emmanuel Celler, a Democrat from New York, did not share the Kennedys' illusions. He said that the 1965 act was designed "to obliterate and nullify and cancel out" the national-origin basis of immigration. Whether or not the act's architects had a hidden agenda, the mathematics of the legislation was kept hidden from the American people, who had no idea that their leaders were throwing out the melting pot in favor of multicultural diversity.

The nonwhite pattern of immigration established by the 1965 act is now reinforced by extensive illegal immigration. The desperate hordes of people barging into the United States are not Europeans. The border with Mexico is porous, to say the least, but the truly alarming fact is that anyone who manages to get a toe on American soil is protected by American law and due process. That means that they are here to stay. Illegals, Brimelow reports, simply fly into New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, apply for asylum, and, because of lack of detention space, are released into the United States on a promise to present themselves at a future hearing. Few, of course, ever do. Thanks to the motor-voter law, they can acquire driving licenses and voter registration cards simultane-

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ously, and from there easily create an American identity. Any who cannot be bothered can wait for the next amnesty.

Another difference between the new immigration and the old is that the old was intermittent, broken by lulls during which recent immigrants were assimilated. In contrast, the new immigration is continuous. The constant inflow of aliens overwhelms the assimilating power of communities, while preserving the alienness of the immigrants. Indeed, even if communities could assimilate, the Justice Department would probably file suit to halt the process as a threat to diversity, a protected right. In many quarters today, assimilation is regarded as a racist goal designed to maintain white hegemony. Local communities are forced at taxpayers' expense to teach the children of legal and illegal aliens in their native tongues. Whether legal or illegal, immigrants have access, protected by courts, to the social safety net.

Welfare for aliens has proved to be expensive; hence the success in November 1994 of California's Proposition 187 banning welfare for illegal aliens. However, the people's decision has been put on hold by federal judges who apparently believe that illegals have an inalienable right of access to the incomes of the native-born.

Our new breed of immigrant also has other rights that take precedence over those of native-born whites. Eighty-three percent of legal immigrants, and almost all of the illegal immigrants, qualify as "protected minorities." They have quota rights to go to the head of the line in college and university admissions, employment opportunities, access to training programs, and promotions. These preferences are expanding as the logic of a privileged and protected class unfolds. Every year two or three million culturally diverse immigrants enter the country and are granted legally protected rights of preference over the indigenous white population.

Brimelow has a term for this insanity, borrowed from former senator Eugene McCarthy. The United States has become "a colony of the world." A guilt-ridden white population is doing penance for the success that made English the world language and the dollar the world currency. To atone for racist cultural hegemony, whites are turning over their country to Third World immigrants. Just after the middle of the next century, whites will be a minority in the United States and can begin to worry about the ethnic genocide that has often been the African and Asian response to multicultural societies.

Brimelow tells his story with facts and charts and logical implications. Despite his confidence in his case, he feels beleaguered and frustrated. He is frustrated because his opponents take refuge in emotional reflexes and deny the obvious, and he is beleaguered because it is morally impermissible to defend anything European or white. So what if a bunch of white people lose their country? It will be a better place after they are gone. And besides, what about our grandfathers? Weren't they immigrants? Yes, says Brimelow, they were, but for the most part they were white, and for that reason few would be able to immigrate to the United States today.

Immigration has become a civil right that noncitizens enjoy in the United States. Brimelow speculates that the promiscuous altruism that calls for open borders is simply an expression of hatred for the nation-state. Here the emotional context becomes complex. Libertarians hate the state and favor open borders as a way of attacking it. Conservatives want to preserve the state in its unifying role. Liberals want to harness it for the latest progressive social goals—namely multiculturalism. And populists favor immigration as a way of combating the formation of a ruling class.

New blood keeps things stirred, but if the new blood is multicultural, privileged, and nonassimilable, blood will prove stronger than geography. Even European empires have broken apart for ethnic reasons. Separatist movements are threatening some European nation-states today and frustrating the drive toward European unity. A multicultural United States is unlikely to fare any better than the Austro-Hungarian Empire. America, it is sometimes said, is an idea, not a nation. But once this point is made, it remains true that a multicultural community is not a people, and without a people there is no country. The United States is a country that is becoming as diverse as the world. Since 1965, it has acquired more cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity within its borders than has been required to maintain Europe as a collection of diverse and separate nation-states. An immigration policy constructed by Camelot liberals is deconstructing our country, and if we want to remain a country, we will have to address the issues raised by Peter Brimelow.

This is not an easy task. There are organized, vested interests—lawyers, politicians, and purveyors of welfare—that benefit from the influx of aliens. To prevent any rational discussion, they encourage the inclination to dismiss any mention of an immigration problem as racist. Brimelow has already had a taste of the treatment that Enoch Powell received when he first raised the issue in Great Britain in 1968. There, as here, the immigrant population concentrated in specific regions so that the bulk of the country could not see what was to come. Powell was simply disbelieved when he spoke of a constituent whose child was the only white pupil in a school class. Similarly, Brimelow reports that in the United States today, 75 percent of the immigrants locate in six states. Thus, many Americans fall victim to the liberal media's line that the "immigration scare" is racist hate-mongering.

The topic certainly scares many intellectuals and demographers whose primary concern is to avoid being called "racist." The epithet stifles discourse, but Brimelow, like Powell, has courage and sticks to his guns. As the facts disseminate, Brimelow will have an impact on immigration policy. A quarter of a century ago Powell was denounced in a hysterical editorial in the *London Times* and stripped of his ministerial position in the Conservative Party. But today the official policy of Great Britain and Europe prohibits prime immigration. Only residual family reunification is permitted, a process that is expected to be completed soon.

The 1965 Immigration Act warrants a big debate. Prior to this act, the reproductive behavior of the native-born was stabilizing the population at around 260 million. But the federal government deceptively adopted an immigration policy that is pushing the population to 390 million by 2050, 140 million of whom will be post-1970 immigrants and their descendants. This socially engineered change in the racial character of the United States population, together with the race-based quota privileges that have been read into the 1964 Civil Rights Act, have enormous implications for the descendants of native-born whites, who, at best, will be second-class citizens in the 21st century if current policies continue. ©

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Constitutional Disorder

by George W. Carey

Recapturing the Constitution: Race, Religion, and Abortion Reconsidered
by Stephen B. Presser
Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing; 398 pp., $24.95

The Supreme Court, as Stephen Presser laments, has wandered far off course; increasingly its Justices have taken to reading their own preferences and prejudices into the Constitution, thereby abandoning their solemn obligation to act as its guardians by interpreting its provisions in accordance with the basic values and intentions of the Framers. What is more, he points out, not only has the Court assumed powers it was never intended to have, its decisions on crucial constitutional issues have embraced values and principles clearly antithetical to those of the Founders. In so doing, he argues, the Court has contributed its share to our cultural degeneration. In sum, he is convinced that "The Supreme Court has lost its way, and it is time for the people to recapture the Constitution."

Presser, a professor of law at Northwestern University, proceeds logically in developing his case. To show that the Court has gone astray, he endeavors to reconstruct the metaphysical foundations of the Framers' thought. He then proceeds, by way of demonstrating what went wrong, to explain the origins and meaning of substantive due process and selective incorporation, before going on to critique the Court's decisions in the areas of racial integration, reapportionment, criminal procedures, the establishment and exercise of religion, and abortion. After this groundwork, he shows how the Court's decisions regarding "race, religion, and abortion" can be "corrected," that is, rendered compatible with the original meaning of the Constitution. The final chapter he devotes to specifying the more fundamental changes, such as amendments, that are needed to "recapture" the Constitution.

Crucial steps in Presser's approach and analysis point to the enormous difficulties confronting those who are intent on showing that the modern Court is, in fact, operating contrary to the intentions of the Founders. We also come to see that devising an *effective* means to control the Court by confining it to the performance of its legitimate functions, i.e., those intended by the Founding Fathers, is no easy matter.

By way of illustrating these difficulties, we can best begin with Presser's approach to determining "original intentions" marked out in the first two chapters. The title of Chapter One, "Clarence Thomas, the Constitution, Religion, Property, and the Rule of Law," is an indication that he is heading into muddy waters. And this turns out to be the case when he hails the appointment of Clarence Thomas to the Court on the grounds that Thomas's approach to constitutional interpretation, as evidenced principally in his speeches prior to his nomination, acknowledged the central role of the "natural law" in our constitutional tradition. Yet, as most contemporary students of American political theory know well, Thomas was only reiterating a view of the American tradition and its abiding values first articulated and championed by Professor Harry Jaffa. As Jaffa would have it, the Constitution must be interpreted through the prism of the Declaration of Independence; a position which he recognizes is at odds with "originalism" as understood, say, by Robert Bork. (So much is evident from the sharp exchanges between the two, the most recent being over Bork's review of Jaffa's recent work, *Original Intent and the Framers of the Constitution*.)

It is significant that Thomas abandoned his "natural law" approach shortly after his nomination, largely because, we may surmise, its proper articulation calls for refinements, clarifications, and distinctions that could not be made, or would lend themselves to distortions, given the partisan nature of the confirmation process. In any event, if the natural law is to be brought into the realm of constitutional interpretation by way of "original understanding," theoretical precision is essential because an influential and articulate element of the liberal community also looks upon the natural law, and specifically the Declaration and its catalog of natural rights, as justification for judicial activism. For this reason, to employ Presser's approach successfully entails carefully distinguishing between versions of natural law, and then convincingly showing which version prevailed during the founding period. There must also be, given the character of Presser's approach, an inquiry into the intended role of the judiciary with respect to the natural law of whatever description, e.g., whether perhaps the natural law itself indicates that the judiciary, as opposed to, say, the legislature, is better equipped to "discover" and implement its principles.

Presser's handling of these and like concerns leaves a good deal to be desired. He relies heavily on Justice Samuel Chase, one of the more controversial figures during the early years of the republic, in sketching the outlines of the natural law. He does not probe deeply into the literature of the founding era, never exploring, for instance, the extensive and highly pertinent primary materials in the Hyneman/Lutz volumes, *American Political Writings during the Founding Era, 1760-1805* or the important findings of M.E. Bradford. Perhaps his use, and nonuse, of *The Federalist* best illustrate the tenuous character of his analysis. He contends, for instance, that the Framers' notion of a republic, as opposed to their understanding of democracy, embodied "supraconstitutional principles" of the natural law, a distinction that he uses to advantage at various places in his discourse. Presser's contention, however, is contradicted by Publius's definition of republic found in *Federalist* 39, a definition that is totally devoid of any "supraconstitutional principles." At the same time, he seeks to bolster his view of "original understanding" by reading too much into *The Federalist*. On this score,

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many—even those most sympathetic to his arguments—might well question his bold assertion that *Federalist 10* "implies there will be a single national interest" which "the framers believed" would "emerge . . . through the working of divine intervention."

Of particular interest in Presser's analysis of how the Court has strayed off course is his treatment of the *Brown* decisions. He maintains—correctly, in my view—that the Court in ordering the states to integrate acted *ultra vires*. He properly faults Bork for contending that the constitutional justification for these decisions can be derived from the 14th Amendment. But Presser's own treatment of the *Brown* decisions is deficient on two matters which raise important questions about the Court that bear, albeit indirectly, on Presser's proposals for recapturing the Constitution.

First, his assertion that the desegregation decisions can be "credited with facilitating the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965," though intended to present something on the positive side in an otherwise very critical analysis of these decisions, is highly questionable. The most systematic study we have that measures the impact of major court decisions is Gerald Rosenberg's *The Hollow Hope*. After careful analysis of the impact of the *Brown* decisions, Rosenberg finds no evidence that they hastened or otherwise helped the passage of either of these acts. The more general point, long suspected by students who have studied the impact of the Court's prayer decisions and reinforced by Rosenberg's more general analysis, is that the capacity of the Court to effect *intended* and large-scale social change through its decisions is greatly overestimated. Conversely, as documented by Graglia and others, the Supreme Court has the demonstrated capacity to cause unintended and irreparable social damage on a massive scale.

Second, contrary to what Presser intimates, Warren was not the moving force behind the desegregation decisions. Felix Frankfurter played this role, his behind-the-scenes maneuvering, when it eventually came to light, raising ethical concerns even among the editors of the *New York Times*. Frankfurter's role in the *Brown* cases is astonishing in view of the fact that he is still generally remembered as the leading proponent of "judicial self-restraint." Indeed, his dissent in the *Barnette* case, with which Presser deals at some length, ranks as perhaps the most eloquent defense of this doctrine. History will now remember Frankfurter as the father of modern judicial activism because of his persistence in securing desegregation by judicial fiat in the absence of any constitutional warrant. But the moral to be drawn from the episode is clear enough, and it is supported by innumerable less dramatic examples: in our discussions about the proper role and function of the Court in a republican regime, we must never assume or take for granted that judges will behave in a principled manner. On the contrary, we should assume the opposite.

While most conservatives will find Presser's "corrections" for the Court's decisions regarding race, religion, and abortion sensible, his final chapter is disappointing from almost any perspective. In proposing amendments that would overturn Court decisions in the areas of prayer in the public schools, abortion, and discrimination as a way to recapture the Constitution, he is clearly dealing with the symptoms of our constitutional disorder, not their causes. Unless we can permanently contain the judiciary, somehow confine it to its proper sphere, we have every reason to believe that in due course there will be judicial abuses in still other areas, so that succeeding generations will have to go through this corrective process over and over again.

At various points Presser seems to be aware of the need for fundamental change to curb the judiciary. In Chapter Four, he remarks that "selective incorporation" is "an unprincipled usurpation of law making power." He believes that "It ought to be reexamined and rejected, as effectively obliterating federalism." We are left to ask why he does not concern himself with amendments that would achieve this objective, amendments that would go a long way toward effectively and permanently restoring the intended relationships between the components of our constitutional system. A better question, and one that is clearly suggested by Presser's analysis, would be this: Given the duplicity of the judges, given their propensity to ignore their constitutional obligations, to distort the Framers' intent, and *inter alia* to thwart the legitimate will of deliberative majorities, why should we not amend the Constitution to strip them of the power of judicial review? In my judgment, given the proven insufficiency of constitutional checks on an irresponsible judiciary, this may well be the only way for the people to recapture the Constitution.

George W. Carey's most recent book is In Defense of the Constitution, *in a revised and expanded edition (Liberty Press, Indianapolis).*

Missing the Obvious

by Paul Gottfried

The Populist Persuasion
by Michael Kazin
New York: Basic Books;
381 pp., $24.00

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Michael Kazin (editor of *Tikkun*, son of a New York man of letters, Alfred Kazin, and professor of history at American University) has produced a book on populism which highlights his own concern: namely, that "left populism" is losing its appeal in America. For Kazin this is a lost opportunity. At the end of the last century, populists Ignatius Donnelly, James Weaver, Leonidas Polk, the young Tom Watson, and William Jennings Bryan had a reputation for being socially radical. The People's Party and the populist Omaha platform of 1892 supported the extension of public services, particularly in education, and proposed the socialization of railroads and utilities. How is it that populism has become a "reactionary" force, one that, in the words of Kevin Phillips, is about "who hates whom"? Kazin worries that at the present time populism's "assertion of resentments based on class and status may be a barrier to constructing a new type of universalism." Instead of "having compassion for the poor and transplanted at home and abroad," populism "too easily becomes a language of the dispirited, the vengeful, and the cynical."

In all fairness it should be said that Kazin does not hide the politically incor-

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rect lineage of the American populist tradition. Unlike Lawrence Goodwyn, for example, he does not try to find perfect fits between agrarian radicals living in late 19th-century Nebraska and Mississippi and the academic liberals of the 1990's. Kazin understands that, by the standards of *Tikkun*, both the populist rank and file and leadership of the 1890's were—culturally, at least—to the right of anyone he is likely to meet in the New York-D.C. corridor. Fundamentalists, nativists, and antimodernists swelled the populist legions, and not surprisingly the populists whom Kazin finds most attractive are those who became Progressives, like Senator George Norris of Nebraska.

What concerns the political class is that populism rejects outright the synthesis of "liberal democracy." That is to say, while populists have no problem with accepting majority rule within definable communities, they scorn the liberal elites which claim the right to govern everyone else. Around the turn of the century it was a bourgeois elite against which the populists arose. Thus the demand for self-government expressed itself as a desire for local or state economic control over utilities and transportation. Back then the Plains States and the Deep South felt themselves captive to the big business and banking monopolies of the Northeast and Upper Midwest. And if one looks at the differential rail rates prevalent at the time, one sees that business interests in some sections of the country were out to keep the other sections impoverished. The populists sought to deal with that situation by "taking back for the people what is theirs": that is, the right to be economically as well as politically free of parasitic outsiders. While it is possible to counter by pointing to conceivable long-term benefit from the monopolies which the populists opposed, e.g., higher productive efficiency at the national level, that is not what the populists wanted. They demanded control of their lives as members of an endangered, predominantly agrarian and small-town America.

Today's populists are also fighting to take back what is theirs, though not what Kazin and other modern liberals would like them to have. Feminists, gay-libbers, and social planners could not control the outcome of such an experiment; the contributors to *Tikkun* would suffer coronary occlusion if judicial racial engineering were ended in the United States. Kazin makes much of the "postmodern disenchantment with fixed concepts and universal dreams." He believes this may be a cause of the difficulty faced by his own kind of folk in activating a sense of public commitment. In point of fact, populists do not suffer from the semantic skepticism to which Kazin refers. They speak about nations, regions, and moral habits in addressing those who participate in their own regional and cultural communities. Moreover, they represent a Euro-American reaction to "human rights" and the fruits of "compassion." The populists in the United States, France, Northern Italy, and Southern Austria want none of liberalism's social blessings, because of the exorbitant price attached to them. They are certainly not interested in providing social services for those illegally transplanted into their midst or in developing multicultural sensitivity. They are furious about public administrators and judges using what Kazin calls "unpopulist levers" to inflict their undemocratic will upon helpless taxpaying citizens.

There are two errors in Kazin's history of populism which require mention. First, he stresses excessively the economics of populism in the present age, particularly in trying to show how the left might reconnect with populist needs. But, as Paul Piccone properly notes, contemporary populism is primarily about politics and culture, and only derivatively economic. Populists by now are less interested in distributing GNP than they are in making government accountable to its supposed masters. Populists believe that politicians and administrators should serve them, and not try to resocialize the public. They represent a late 20th-century response, often angry and sometimes incoherent, against the equation of modern democracy with public administration. Populists insist that democracy is about authorized citizens governing themselves, and not about them being managed or indoctrinated by a master class; especially by one whose beliefs and loyalties are different from their own.

Second, Kazin perceives too much racism and racial resentment in the origins of the postwar conservative movement. On this point he is not entirely consistent; he does point out correctly that Goldwater and many of his followers opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because of their concerns for property and constitutional issues. He also notes the importance of anticommunism and the anxiety about union power in analyzing the components of postwar conservatism. Nonetheless, he keeps returning to George Wallace's right-wing populism, mixed with racial animosity, as a paradigm of conservative politics.

Kazin fails to note that Wallace and the Wallaceites were an unpleasant diversion from business as usual for mainstream conservatives. That business of course was the protracted struggle against the communist evil empire. In 1968 Frank Meyer made precisely this point in *National Review* when he urged conservatives to vote for Richard Nixon and against George Wallace. Meyer depicted Wallace as a New Deal Democrat capitalizing on class resentment, who, unlike Nixon, did not embody the "mainstream of Western civilization," which was Christian anticommunism. Wallace, Meyer argued, was distracting the right from the enemy at our gates and threatened to siphon off votes from the Republican Party to the advantage of a tepid Cold Warrior, Hubert Humphrey.

Kazin ought to read conservative columnists and politicians of the 60's. He might find himself surprised to discover how predominant a theme the Cold War was for them: everything else in the way of postwar conservative principle could be compromised. Conservatives of the period viewed the civil rights movement differently at different times, depending on whether its critics or allies were more useful in pursuing an anticommunist strategy. William F. Buckley, for example, went from being hostile to Martin Luther King, Jr., to flattering his memory profusely. In both cases, the allies whom Buckley made in his career as a militant Cold Warrior were the critical variable.

Kazin confuses conventional conservatism with right-wing populism, though they are clearly two different things. While the Deep South was vital for Goldwater in 1964, the electoral overlap between anticommunist Republicanism and the populist right was the result of an electoral conjuncture of circumstances. The opponents of the civil rights movement and of federal social engineering had no one better to vote for in 1964 than a Cold War activist who opposed the Civil Rights Acts because of his views on property. But the "Middle American Radicalism" that Donald Warren has located within modern populism has nothing to do with the combi-

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nation of military spending and business deregulation espoused by the Republican Party in 1964, and, again, in 1980. Populists disliked, and still do dislike, corporations and the federal government, whereas the Goldwaterites were not notably hostile to either.

With a bit more probing, Kazin might have discovered the obvious: that establishment conservatives care even less for right-wing populists than he does. Whence the fighting on the American right, to which Kazin seems oblivious. Conventional conservatives mimic populist rhetoric while trying to isolate or moderate real populists; the populist right, by contrast, rails against the political class, including the Republican Party and the neoconservative neutralizers of their cause. For the American right, populism has become a problem or a solution, depending on where one stands in the conservative wars. In no way, however, does it hold undisputed sway among those conservatives whom Kazin likely has encountered.

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Jesus!

by Philip Jenkins

The Complete Gospels: Revised and Expanded Edition
Edited by Robert J. Miller
San Francisco: Polebridge Press; 462 pp., $18.00

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As long as there have been Christians, they have searched for the "real Jesus." In the last two centuries, this search has been directed toward discovering the authentic historical personality who supposedly lies behind what are seen as mythical accretions, a quest that has inevitably led to conflict with fundamentalists who resent the application of conventional scholarly criteria to the essential documents of the faith. We seem to have a simple dichotomy between the scholars and critics on the one hand (educated, daring, honest) versus the massed forces of Elmer Gantry on the other. The choice seems straightforward, and it is tempting for educated individuals, whether or not they describe themselves as Christian, to listen respectfully to the opinions of The Scholarly World. In recent years, "educated opinion" on the search for the real Jesus has acquired an institutional basis in the "Jesus Seminar," that group which asserts that only X percent of the words attributed to Jesus are likely to be historical, and that no serious attention should be paid to the Lord's Prayer, the Sermon on the Mount, and so on. It is distressing, but how can one argue with the experts? Surely we should not align ourselves with the creationists and the simplest true believers against this impressive band of doctors and chairholders? Now, the Jesus Seminar has launched its boldest venture, which is no less than a presentation of all the gospels, including those rejected by the Church for whatever reasons of bigotry, patriarchalism, or anti-Semitism led them to rely exclusively on the flawed texts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Finally, we have the basis of a "Scholars' Version," SV, the first New Testament translation to be undertaken free of the biases and political interests of church and state.

The Complete Gospels is one of several books that in the last few years have made widely available the opinions of progressive opinion in the area of biblical scholarship, books like Burton L. Mack's *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q & Christian Origins* and *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* by Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar. Like these, *The Complete Gospels* is accessible in an attractive trade paperback, ideal for religious discussion groups; for decades to come, lay opinion will be citing this material as, dare I say, gospel truth.

It all seems too good to be true, and assuredly it is. While the scholarship manifested by the latest "Quest" is daring and occasionally perceptive, the underlying assumptions are quite unsound. These books are in their way sectarian manifestoes as overt as any of the earlier translations which the editors so despise. And in *The Complete Gospels*, the translations have traveled so far downmarket that the end result is utterly embarrassing.

The latest "Quest for Jesus" owes its origins to the discovery of two major texts and a host of lesser ones. The first key source is unknown to us as a document, but can be reconstructed from any New Testament. In essence, it has been known for over 150 years that Matthew, Mark, and Luke are closely related documents, which can be presented in the form of a connected synopsis. The best solution for the "synoptic problem" is that Mark wrote his gospel, which was used by Matthew and Luke. However, both these latter also had access to another common source, which included such familiar material as the Temptation in the wilderness, the Sermon on the Mount, and a great deal of archaic-looking material about demons and exorcisms. This common source was given the name Q, and the more it was studied, the odder it looked. This was a "gospel" that probably lacked narrative structure, and consisted of a series of statements linked by "Jesus Said . . . ," "Jesus Said . . ." The "book" began not with a birth story, but with the preaching of John the Baptist, and it ended with a not-yet-crucified Jesus assuring his apostles that they would sit on twelve thrones and judge the tribes of Israel. There is not the slightest suspicion of doctrines such as the Virgin Birth, the Incarnation, or the Resurrection, and the community which read or recited Q felt no need to refer to the death of Jesus. If this was an authentic voice of early Christianity, it looked like a distinctly Unitarian group, one which attached no significance to the death or atonement of Jesus. All very unsettling.

And then came the Nag Hammadi library. In the 1940's, an accidental find in Egypt produced an astonishing library of early Christian and Gnostic texts, at least as important for our historical

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knowledge as the better publicized Dead Sea Scrolls, but which had the good fortune to escape the political conflict and prima donna egos which sabotaged that rival project for decades. Since the late 1970's, the Nag Hammadi library has been available in good and easily affordable translations, which have been assiduously mined for the "rival traditions" that they appear to present for the early Christian world. The heavy influence of later Gnostic texts gives them what might be termed a Californian air, with copious suggestions of sexual rituals, dance liturgies, astrology, female prophets, and homosexuality. However, the real treasure of the library was the Gospel of Thomas, which in its way seemed to compliment Q. This "Fifth Gospel" comprises Sayings of Jesus, presented in ancient form ("Jesus Said . . .") and without narrative framework, and there are many substantive parallels to Q. It was soon proposed that Q and Thomas represented an authentic "wing" of early Christianity, even a forgotten core, perhaps the most ancient stratum of all; and its doctrines were distinctly unsupernatural and even un-Christian. They were seriously compared to Zen and Greek doctrines, and the "authentic Jesus" became quite literally a wandering Cynic philosopher, obviously an attractive concept for a late 20th-century academic. This led inevitably to a further perception, that the "Q-Thomas" documents provided a yardstick by which to judge the authenticity and accuracy of other traditions.

So far, much of this intellectual reconstruction is plausible, sensible, and realistic. At this point, however, we meet *The Complete Gospels*, which offers "everything you need to empower your own search for the historical Jesus" (John Dominic Crossan). This includes new translations of the four canonical gospels, plus Q, the "Gospel of Signs" said to underlie the Gospel of John, and a dozen or so lesser texts—the Gospel of Peter, the Secret Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of the Hebrews, and so on. The lay reader is likely to take all this at face value, believing, that these odd documents are somehow "lost," "hidden," "suppressed," presumably for their seditious feminist, political, or mystical appeal. In reality, this book should be sold with a prominently displayed label stating "Warning: Cranks at Work." As few nonspecialists are likely to realize, the materials presented here are far more controversial than the authors hint. At every stage, a systematic policy of dating canonical documents ludicrously late, while claiming early dates for the apocryphal works that vary from the speculative to the hilarious, prevails.

For example, the Gnostic sects of the second and third centuries were tremendously prolific in producing their contorted speculations, most of which bear a distant relationship to the canonical gospels the existence of which they presuppose. Examples of these monstrosities include the "Secret Book of James" and the "Dialogue of the Savior," both probably written anywhere from 70 years to a century after the last of the four gospels, and lacking even marginal relevance to the "historical Jesus"; yet here they are, with the "Dialogue" unconscionably dated between 50 and 100, before John and Mark. Claiming composition of the late and spurious "Gospel of Mary" as "arguably . . . in the late first or early second century" is impudent nonsense, explicable only in terms of the political need to extol an otherwise worthless tract because it happens to "suggest that women held prominent roles in the early church." The early and independent character of the Passion narrative in the "Gospel of Peter" is dubious in the extreme, and the case for its possible value weakly argued. Incredibly, the so-called "Secret Gospel of Mark" is included as genuine testimony to the existence of a deviant secret form of the canonical work, preserved clandestinely by sneaky Church fathers. Could a footnote not have noted the widespread suspicion that the whole text is a 20th-century forgery, the Piltdown skull of New Testament research? And to take perhaps the most telling example of all, there is no recognition here of the real likelihood that even the text of Thomas that we have from Nag Hammadi may not be nearly as primitive as claimed, but might reflect the heresies of two or three centuries after the time of Jesus. However, in this mirror world, the word "canonical" has implications of "staid, narrow, bigoted," while Thomas and its ilk have acquired an aura of infallibility.

If the dates are wrong, the sequence of ideas is wrong, and so is any suggestion that the assorted farragoes from Nag Hammadi represent any authentic version of first-century Christianity, as opposed to the countless hybrid forms which the speculative philosophers and heretical sectaries of late antiquity loved to invent. A moderately informed reading of the texts here only reinforces the value of the four *real* gospels, and, conceivably but not certainly, that of Thomas. *The Complete Gospels* is near worthless, not because it challenges a canon, but because it canonizes the spurious. It will also poison religious discourse for a generation, by "empowering" every crank to find some sort of scriptural justification for his fantasies, in the belief that the Gospel of Mary is as authoritative a guide to the "real Jesus" as the Synoptics.

But are we truly not "empowered" by having these diverse materials so conveniently bound together in one volume? It is unquestionably useful to have access to such frequently cited texts as Q and the Gospel of Signs, to say nothing of interesting later documents like the "Dialogue of the Savior"; but the overwhelming drawback in handling them lies in the translation. By this, I mean that the texts presented here are translated in such a semiliterate and downright foolish way that they are more or less unusable. I assume the Jesus Seminarians have a perfect command of the Biblical languages, but their control of English is tenuous. If this is the historical Jesus, then He was an ill-educated tenth-grader with a painfully limited vocabulary and a hamfisted turn of speech that often veers toward the bureaucratic.

Examples clamor for quotation, but a few will suffice. "Blessed are you" becomes "Congratulations to you," as in the Beatitudes (the Congratitudes?). To the demand "Heal me," Jesus replies with the majestic words, "Okay, you're healed!"; and to the demon, He utters the imperious exorcism "Shut up and get out of him." "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" is transmogrified to "Well done, you competent and reliable slave." Serving God and Mammon? Try "You can't be enslaved to God and a bank account." The translations here are at least consistent: but so consistently bad that any sustained reading is impossible. This "fresh, new language" is ostensibly termed the "Scholars Version," SV, but a more plausible description might be the "Hallmark Version": HV perhaps.

Philip Jenkins heads the Religious Studies Program at Penn State University. He is the author of Using Murder: The Social Construction of Serial Homicide *(Aldine de Gruyter).*

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Cherished Void

by Bill Kauffman

Gene Roddenberry: The Myth and the Man Behind Star Trek
by Joel Engel
New York: Hyperion;
283 pp., $22.95

Beyond Uhura: Star Trek and Other Memories
by Nichelle Nichols
New York: Putnam's;
320 pp., $22.95

To the Stars
by George Takei
New York: Pocket Books;
406 pp., $22.00

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Gene Roddenberry was a hustling ex-cop who wanted to strike it rich in television, and he did, with a series called *Star Trek*, which he once described (before his slide into self-mythicizing and lucrative licensing deals) as "*Wagon Train* to the Stars." His public image has heretofore been that of the atheistic Gentle Ben of science fiction, a bear of a man who injected his sunny humanism into weekly TV and changed the world. Joel Engel, whose scathing new biography blasts from the sky the man who liked to be called "the Great Bird of the Galaxy," claims that "his indirect impact on aspects of popular culture these last three decades has been eclipsed, arguably, only by Elvis Presley."

Eugene Wesley Roddenberry was born to a lineman for the county (El Paso) and a devout Baptist mother. When he was two, the family moved to Los Angeles, where the elder Roddenberry became one of the LAPD's finest. Gene was a "gangly, unathletic, and sickly" boy, as most creative sorts are. As a teenager he had the usual wise-guy view about the literal incredibility of religious rites: "How the hell did Jesus come to be something to be eaten?" he wondered, and he smirkingly dismissed partakers of communion as "a bunch of cannibals." This conviction he took to his urn.

Roddenberry copiloted a B-17 in the Second World War, and after his discharge he flew for Pan Am as a "glorified bus driver." He joined the LAPD and wrote speeches for its chief William Parker while learning the craft of television screenwriting. He sold to *Dragnet* and *Dr. Kildare* and *Have Gun, Will Travel* before breaking in as a producer of the short-lived series *The Lieutenant*. Then came *Star Trek*, which debuted in September 1966 and lasted but three seasons, a victim of middling ratings and declining quality, though among its 79 episodes are some real gems written by the likes of Harlan Ellison, Richard Matheson, Robert Bloch, and yes, Gene Roddenberry. Or at least credited to Roddenberry. Engel calls *Star Trek*'s creator the "mutable man": he depicts him as a supple liar, a thief who swiped credit for work his underlings did while the Great Bird was nesting with actress-models in his aerie. In doctoring scripts he had a knack for turning the *mot juste* into the (blessedly homonymic) *mot faux*.

"Nearly everyone who worked with him regularly in a creative capacity on any incarnation of *Star Trek* eventually disliked or distrusted him," says Engel. When Roddenberry wasn't ham-fistedly botching dialogue or avariciously cutting deals, he was a maundering drunk going on and on about his "creative juices," most of which were spilled on things other than *Star Trek*. Harlan Ellison, who wrote the outstanding episode "The City on the Edge of Forever" (the one with Joan Collins as a purebred pacifist social worker in Depression America), scoffs that Roddenberry "could barely write." In a sense Engel's book is a brief on behalf of the studios and executives who have long been cast as demons in the hackneyed play *Visionary Artist Versus the Soulless Men in Suits*. As such it is a useful corrective, though Engel's sources have their own axes to grind, and calumniating the dead is a coward's game.

Roddenberry was often praised for understanding that space exploration would not be the exclusive realm of white men, but of the three women he cast in *Star Trek*, two were his mistresses (Nichelle Nichols as communications officer Uhura and Majel Barrett as Nurse Chapel) and the third, bombshell Grace Lee Whitney (Yeoman Rand) was, one suspects, at least on his wish list. Like most of the probable candidates for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination, Roddenberry dumped his frump of a first wife for a hotter number—Majel Barrett, who became the second Mrs. Roddenberry—once his ship docked.

Nichelle Nichols—and whatever you do don't call her an intergalactic telephone operator; she's the kind of black woman who emphasizes the word *professional*—has written her own memoir, *Beyond Uhura*, and it is not a bad read. She was a dancer whose father (like Zora Neale Hurston's) was mayor of an all-black town, in Nichols' case Robbins, Illinois. Old flame Roddenberry cast her in *Star Trek*—over the objections of racist NBC executives, she claims, though Engel maintains that the network was eager for black faces in supporting roles.

Her thespian muscles atrophied after a few dozen rounds of "hailing frequencies open, Captain," and Nichols says she threatened to quit the show after its first season, but then at an NAACP *soirée* Martin Luther King, Jr., approached her and pled: "You must not leave. . . . For the first time, the world sees us as we should be seen, as equals, as intelligent people—as we *should* be. There will always be role models for black children; you are a role model for everyone." Nichelle stayed employed for the greater good of humanity.

Another fixture on the bridge, George Takei as Mr. Sulu, has also produced a readable autobiography. Takei, whose family was interned in FDR's concentration camps for Japanese-Americans, describes the frustrations of an Asian actor in Hollywood. (His first job was dubbing the hilarious monster flick *Rodan*.) Takei has inhabited Sulu for nearly three decades; like Nichols, he is sensitive to slapstick scenes in the *Star Trek* movies that he considers infra dig. In the sixth *Star Trek* film, Sulu gets his captaincy, and Takei's obvious pride is both touching and a touch eldritch: actor and role have merged, and I have a feeling that when George is beamed up from our own planet he will be swathed in red velour.

Nichols and Takei are grateful (for good reason) to Roddenberry; the mendacious dipso of Engel's book is replaced by the backslapping prank-pulling genius of legend. The villain of the universe according to Sulu and Uhura is the Canadian ham William Shatner—Captain Kirk—who comes off as a self-absorbed Hollywood phony that Budd Schulberg and Clifford Odets might have dreamed up on a particularly bitter night. "Bill is

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not going to be satisfied," Takei once quipped, "until we're all gone and he gets to do all our parts."

The standard line is that *Star Trek* shimmers with optimism. "There seems to be a compulsion among writers to picture the future as totally computerized, inhumanly authoritarian, and coldly big-brotherish," Roddenberry complained in one memo. Not *Star Trek*, he boasted. Yet the series is JFK New Frontier Cold War liberalism in space: lofty sentiments about brotherhood float around the bridge, and hey darky won't you answer that phone? The Enterprise crew is duty-bound to follow "The Prime Directive," which proscribes "interference with the normal development of alien life and societies." Yet in their planet-hopping they destroy gods and tear down superstitions and inflict the blessings of reason and technology on benighted aliens. Imagine Ayn Rand as the Queen of Outer Space, killing mystics and re-educating eccentrics, and otherwise setting the universe free.

Roddenberry's outline for the episode "The Return of the Archons" imagines a stagnant planet becalmed by religion: "What can be seen on the street, the happy friendliness and tranquillity, masks despair, dullness, almost a living death." So Kirk and company demolish the Archons' god: things will be swell in no time, we are sure, though Star Fleet may have to hunt down and torch a fugitive warlord or two. At these moments *Star Trek*, though entertaining, gives us an armed Peace Corps of smug blunderbusses: kind of a best-case scenario of a World Federalist future. That this universe would be as inhospitable to Gene Roddenberry as it is to pious Archons may never have occurred to its creator. After *Star Trek*, Roddenberry's own star dimmed. He wrote and produced the Rock Hudson black comedy *Pretty Maids All in a Row*, a Roger Vadim flop. Hard up for money, he penned a screenplay for an exotic band of British psychics known as "The Nine," whose transworldly sources informed them that in past lives Roddenberry had been Moses's grandson, Peter's father, and maybe Jupiter himself. The things a skeptical humanist has to do to put bread on the table and coke up his nose. He was largely excluded from the production of the first six feature films of the *Star Trek* franchise, though they tickled his cupidity. (Like the series, the movies are best when they feature swashbuckling and needling camaraderie, and worst when they fog up in vaporing about the meaning of it all.) Roddenberry hit bottom with the execrable *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, the tediously didactic syndicated series which ran from 1987 to 1994. The 24th-century bores who populate *The Next Generation* "are not perfect," conceded Roddenberry in the series bible for writers, "but their flaws do not include falsehood, petty jealousies and the banal hypocrisies common in the 20th century." The man lamenting our foibles was recalled by Leonard Nimoy (Mr. Spock) in this way: "My business dealings with him were always miserable. Gene always had an agenda—his own. I didn't see him step up to bat and be the decent honorable humanist that he portrayed himself to be."

Gene Roddenberry died in 1991 at the age of 70. Engel dismisses him as a tin-eared windbag whose eternal flame was his desire to be a *writer* while doing as little writing and as much fornicating as possible. This seems excessively harsh: a coeval biography, a pedestrian job by a Roddenberry buddy, paints the subject as a chummy and brilliant visionary, and the affectionate recollections of Roddenberry's friends—including Ray Bradbury, one of America's finest living writers—suggest that for all his flaws he had the Spark.

I had not seen an episode of *Star Trek* in probably a dozen years, but after finishing these books I sat through several hours of its comfortable exoticism: the Enterprise's engines lose power, Kirk seduces superlunary babes, Dr. McCoy drawls wisecracks, Spock arches his eyebrow, the rainbow supernumeraries chirp about warp speed and hailing frequencies and courses plotted, and I sat mesmerized by the sweet familiarity of it all. Much as we might jeer at Moondoggles and military shuttles, space exploration stirs the soul, and in sending this ensemble out to strange new worlds, orbs of ice and lava populated by mad scientists and green wenches with remarkably human contours, *Star Trek* was more than a pleasurable time-waster: it was lovable. One hopes, for Roddenberry's sake, that the God he reviled shows mercy on Gene, and allows the poor sinner to spend the afterlife in his cherished void, where no man has gone before.

Bill Kauffman is the author of Every Man a King, Country Towns of New York, *and* America First!

Brief Mentions

With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa. *By E.B. Sledge (Novato, California: Presidio Press), 342 pp., $24.95*

Devil Dogs forced to watch their Corps become a corporation—Total Quality Management, affirmative action, sexual harassment awareness training—will draw inspiration from E.B. Sledge's book, originally published in 1981 and soon to be reissued. More than any tactical manual, *With the Old Breed* reveals what success under fire is all about: fortitude, loyalty, discipline, determination—no matter what the odds. Those who most need to read this book, however, are not marines but rather the politicians who have uttered the phrase "New World Order" and meant it. Sledge's picture of war as "brutish, inglorious, and a terrible waste" might make the most committed empire-builder hesitate, if only for a moment, before he votes to pack off another young man to a lonely, dirty death: "The firing continued, and bullets hit the mark. The wounded Japanese subsided into the muddy little ditch. He and his comrades had done their best. 'They died gloriously on the field of honor for the emperor,' is what their parents would be told. In reality their lives were wasted on a muddy stinking slope for no good reason." Now a professor of biology at the University of Montevallo in Alabama, Sledge served at Peleliu and Okinawa as an infantryman with the First Marine Division. Violent, graphic, full of "mud and maggots," his tale is not for the squeamish: "Kneeling in the mud I had dug the [fox]hole no more than six or eight inches deep when the odor of rotting flesh got worse. There was nothing to do but continue to dig, so I closed my mouth and inhaled with short shallow breaths. Another spadeful of soil out of the hole released a mass of wriggling maggots that came welling up as though those beneath them were pushing them out. The next stroke of the spade unearthed buttons and scraps of cloth from a Japanese army jacket buried in the mud. With the next thrust, metal hit the breastbone of a rotting Japanese corpse." Learning about the extraordinary endurance of ordinary men who lived from day to day in "hell's own cesspool" will shame anyone who

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has ever complained because his plane was 15 minutes late.

—*Christopher Check*

Race and Culture. *By Thomas Sowell (New York: Basic Books), 331 pp., $25.00*

Thomas Sowell's latest book explodes many clichés regarding slavery, "discrimination," and the wretched conditions of blacks and other minorities. In Sowell's view, Afrocentric "historians" have turned history on its head in their effort to enlist an ignorant public in a campaign to vilify the West. Sowell illustrates that "racism" and other crimes for which the Afrocentrists denounce Western society are by no means unique to the West. Slavery, a worldwide phenomenon, came to an end largely because of the British navy's efforts to liberate slaves from their Arab and Asian masters. The Arab slave trade was far more brutal than that practiced in the West; the Arabs forced their miserable subjects to walk barefoot across the Sahara, an ordeal that claimed many more lives than the miseries endured in the Middle Passage. The European imperialists who extended their reign into the Third World were quite humane compared to certain tribes and ideological factions (i.e. the Xhosa or the Khmer Rouge), and some minorities in the colonies, fearing what would happen when their tribal foes gained a free hand, dreaded the departure of the Western imperialists (just as the Hutu of Rwanda dreaded the withdrawal of French forces—and the elimination of the "safety zone" the French established—during the civil war last summer). Although much of this is common knowledge, the Khalid Mohammed school of cultural theory is the new orthodoxy. This assault on historical truth is not unique to our society or our age. On the contrary, groups at the bottom of a social hierarchy have often falsified their history so as to attain a spurious dignity. For example, the Sinhalese of Sri Lanka, less educated and less prosperous than their Tamil neighbors, developed an elaborate mythology which holds, among other things, that their ancestors belonged to the original Aryan race, from which Hitler's supermen descended. But it is only in our day that Afrocentrist fantasies have gained a widespread and devoted following.

—*Michael Washburn*

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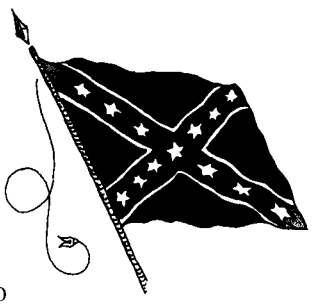

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Letter From Massachusetts

by Eugene Narrett

Beacon to the Nations

A few months ago and despite my better judgment, I spent some time watching the NFL playoffs. Seeking relief *from* rather than *in* work, I soon was reminded that the tube is a conduit of malaise and of pop cultural propaganda. For every glimpse of the tenacious gifts of Dan Marino, there were hours of dumb talk and worse commercials whose gist was a kind of asinine "we are the world" homogeneity. Czech nuns and Moroccan pimps talked earnestly of software. AT&T told me "to know no boundaries." One moment I was watching helmeted, 300-pound sociopaths break dancing in the end zone; then in a blare of electronic music they were replaced by a winsomely handsome brown youth leaning lazily against the rail of a coral. Was he dreaming?

Apparently not, though I wish I had been. Intercut quickly with his happy face were noisy, dusty scenes of painted magi gyrating to a digireedoo. Suddenly, a Coke bottle fell out of the sky. They all drank of it. They danced happily together. It was California 2001.

But I didn't want to buy the world a Coke. I wanted to watch Marino. "*That's* what the world wants today," I muttered scroogily. And then I remembered Milan Kundera's apposite comments on attempts to legislate a nation of perfect harmony, "where every man is a note in a magnificent fugue and anyone who refuses his note is a mere black dot, useless and meaningless, easily caught and squashed between the fingers like an insect."

That of course is the standardized pliability to which the diversity-mongers and multinationals alike wish to reduce us: a world of grinning, fizz-guzzling consumers and consumerettes trapped in a never-ending Coke commercial. Real differences, distinct regions, nations, cultures, and values will melt into a global economy. Freedom will devolve into a gospel of "choice": Coke or Pepsi, Macburgers or Burger Crown, abortion or welfare. And anyone who refuses to sing these notes will become a mere black dot, easily caught and squashed by the unisexual technocrats of the global nanny-state.

Discomfort with such futures helped make the last elections a referendum on American identity. We voted "no" to such symptoms of social decay as Roberta Achtenberg, Hillary Rodham, Oprah, O.J., and Janet Reno, the minister of justice who cared so much for those children at Waco she had to incinerate them. The elections indicated growing awareness that we have gone badly astray. But what is the way back?

In reflecting on our origins and contemporary direction, we would do well to contrast the misplaced smugness of we-are-the-world triumphalism with a formative sermon from America's early years, John Winthrop's "Model of Christian Charity." Let us look first at the trend and next at what we might retrieve.

Ever since the Cairo population conference, that fiesta of intrusive and intolerant do-gooders, liberal media in tandem with multinationals touting the "global economy" have floated a noisome rationale for the appeal of American culture. We are the world, they suggest, and the world loves us just as we are. And *what* are we?

The departure of American troops from Berlin last year, like the crumbling of the Wall, provided powerful images of a renewed world. But the glacier's retreat reveals some foul detritus. In articles celebrating the apparent triumph of our values, newspapers in New York and Boston quoted a Berlin teenager. "Just about everything we have that's fun comes from the United States," he said. "If it weren't for the Americans we wouldn't have baseball caps. We wouldn't have malls or fast food shops or skateboards. Life just wouldn't be as good." Perhaps this young fellow is a budding ironist, a master of the deadpan put-on. Perhaps, like so many today, he's too far gone to know what he's saying. What is most troubling, however, was the glee with which the Northeast's newspapers of record highlighted his comments.

Boston is known for priggish arrogance, once blue-nosed, now politically correct. With liberal Democrats in the White House, its major newspaper has taken to cheering on the pop culture which the Clintons incarnate: slob Willy and his Big Macs; tough Hilly fooling with her hair.

Shortly before the elections, Boston's liberal daily followed the above-quoted nonsense with a front-page perspective on the global appeal of American values. In Egypt, the writer assured us, "the most popular television program is 'The Bold and the Beautiful' . . . Cairo boutiques name themselves after the soap's main characters—Brooke, Ridge, Thorn and Storm." Hold your nose; this is only the beginning of the catalog. "In Amman, the Jordanian capital, upscale teenagers wear American baseball caps turned backwards, listen to rock 'n' roll and watch American television shows. . . . In the tonier neighborhoods of Tehran, women are barely inside their front doors when their robes are abandoned to reveal miniskirts. Cigarettes are lit and homemade alcohol consumed. The latest Hollywood films are rented by door-to-door salesmen."

Don't know whether to laugh or cry? Well, consider that such attitudes are not only a left-wing phenomenon. Idolaters of the market carry these insidious notions across the thin membrane between liberals and money-Republicans. The

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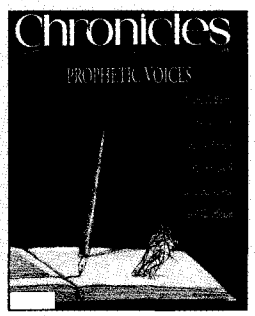

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compromised immunity that results when wealth displaces moral values was reflected in an influential "conservative" biweekly, which offered some pop-cultural cheerleading by an American *ephebe* in Prague. "Glitzy stores and state-of-the-art showrooms open every month," enthused the young capitalist (an editor for the Czech edition, I kid you not, of *Elle* magazine). "Until recently," he continued, "it was rare to see a Mercedes or BMW; now they're common. Last spring several Japanese restaurants opened." Are these the signs of America's triumph? The passage reads like a Soviet-style caricature of the West. I thought we cherished Prague for Hradcany Castle and Old Town Square; for civilized habits; for Havel, Kundera, and Kafka.

Apparently not. The young entrepreneur equated "the American influence on culture" with "Danielle Steel and Stephen King." Shall we be of good cheer now that "Czechs shop at K-Mart, eat at Little Caesar's, watch *Baywatch* and *Beverly Hills 90210*"? Many present such filth as a triumph of America's "openness, sense of freedom, possibility and vitality." Perhaps this is to be expected from an elite which routinely celebrates lesbian sperm shoppers. But true conservatives are less than amused by sleazy characterizations of openness and freedom.

In the age of Clinton there are two antithetical visions of American identity. One view confounds freedom with material entitlements and tolerance with license. The other defines freedom as a rising opposition to government's arrogant intrusions and unnatural ideologies. It sets individualism against the enervating noise and exhausted frenzy of Hollywood's primping starlets and pampered athletes. Some of us understand that America's vitality stems from a moral sense, a willingness to accept responsibility and to defend the attendant rights. Opposed to this are drugs, soaps, victimology, narcissistic lifestyles, and contempt for tradition. Emanating from Washington, Manhattan, Hollywood, and wherever the cultural elite gathers, this filth reflects our slide into infantile consumerism.

"Mickey Mouse will see you dead," insists a bitter CIA operative in Robert Stone's *A Flag for Sunrise*. His remark, tossed off to a hall full of shocked Hondurans, hints at the mindless indulgences that drag us down. Our beacon to the nations has become a neon glare mesmerizing what is weakest in people abroad with what is cheapest in us. Are soap operas, drugs, teen suicide, quotas, and single-parent "families" the future that we want? Are we content to surrender our vigor to the paralyzing ministrations of the nanny-state?

"There really are no foreign names in America anymore," gloats a liberal columnist, adding, "90 percent of the American dream is simply showing up." (And they wonder why Proposition 187 passed.) We no longer are, it is claimed, nor should we be an essentially European culture. No, that's "racist." Instead we will be a chaos of global orality, an anticulture of slogans and consumerist poses.

Multiculturalism is the latest pose. It collects people like shades of lipstick, one from each quota box. There is a different color for each day, for every mood. As long as the shades aren't white, the liberals love them. Just show up. As the man said, "Mickey Mouse will see you dead."

What were our beginnings that our end should be so tawdry? That Establishment pundits should confuse our culture's decay with victory? Three hundred and sixty-five years ago, on a small ship in the middle of the gray North Atlantic, John Winthrop sat writing a lay sermon. When he walked out of his cabin to read it, he looked not only to the stormy west but toward the obscure future. Would his flock kindle a clear light there, or only a deceiving gleam? "We are entered into a covenant with God for this work," Winthrop wrote. "He hath given us leave to draw our own articles. But if we neglect them . . . seeking great things for ourselves, the Lord shall surely break out against us." Think of Brooke and Thorn and Storm.

"The only way to avoid this shipwreck," Winthrop went on, "and to provide for our posterity, is to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God. We must be willing to abridge ourselves of superfluities . . . always having before our eyes our community as members of the same body."

The keynote of Winthrop's remarks is dignity (where is that virtue stressed today?) and responsibility for oneself and for one's community. Only such a moral commitment, those pioneers believed, would protect us as a nation and secure us as individuals. If we so act, Winthrop continued, then "ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand, and we shall be as a city upon a hill."

Somehow, from these beginnings we have changed from a lamp to a mirror of dazzling and trashy brilliance. In it we see the world, and the world sees us, as a self-gratifying toy. And in working this bad magic, the bacchantes of spurious diversity and bizarre lifestyles have joined idolaters of the free market. Both tell us "we are the world" but at the same time divide us into categories by gender and color, favoring some, vilifying others for being too Western, too rooted in the culture Winthrop helped forge. Some are given rights without responsibilities, others are told to shell out and keep quiet.

We would do well to scrutinize how our national spokespeople package and define us. Seeing ourselves reflected so badly abroad, it may be time to shut the gates and reset our understanding both of America and of individualism.

Eugene Narrett is a professor of English at Framingham State College in Massachusetts and a columnist for the Middlesex News.

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POLITICS

Image Is Everything

by Janet Scott Barlow

For at least a year now—ever since the evidence became intellectually irrefutable while yet being emotionally deniable—every second sentence written or spoken about Bill Clinton by the dominant media has begun with the word "if." Reduced to its essence, the two-sentence refrain goes like this: *Americans do not believe Bill Clinton. If Bill Clinton can become credible, Americans will believe him.* And if my eyes were brown, they wouldn't be blue. Absent possibility, *if* foretells fantasy. Here is reality: Bill Clinton is not credible, therefore Americans do not believe him. Like the journalists who cover him, however, the President seems baffled by such simplicity. "Character," he has said, "is a journey, not a destination." Well, so is a drive to the Grand Canyon, but isn't the ultimate point to *get* there?

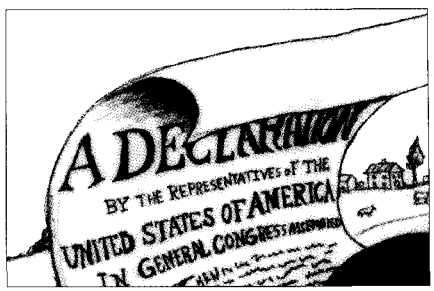
For lack of a better theory, I have come to believe that the purpose of Bill Clinton's election was existential—he is what the country had to encounter in order to move on. Only with his personality in that office at this moment could Americans confront with such pristine perfection, such pragmatic promise, all that they loathe about politicians: the simultaneous sucking up to and disdain for public opinion; the nearly pathological refusal to give a direct answer; the assumption that attitude can substitute for behavior and behavior for action; the sin of pride made even more offensive by displays of false modesty; the vanity, the condescension, the hypocrisy, the lying. In his unseemly splendor (there is no context in which he looks natural), Clinton beams a ceaseless message: *Don't ever make a mistake like me again.*

Of course, it was all there from the beginning; and to see it now is to remember it then. One's first impression of Bill Clinton, you'll recall, is that he is the product of egotism added to insecurity, an excruciating combination in a politician, because the resulting relentlessness of need wears people out. In other words, he is a man who has spent his entire life making first impressions (which must, on some level, wear *him* out). He is said to be dazzlingly intelligent, yet nothing he says, not a single thing, is inherently interesting. His idea of dialogue is to offer as many people as possible the opportunity to hear him. He gives unmistakable signs of seeing female adoration as his due, and he has a terror of the truth so great (what does he fear it will do to him?) that he makes blatantly self-damaging statements, his vaunted intelligence useless to protect him.

Once in office he glows, lit from within with the pleasure he takes from the pleasure he gives merely at being seen. (It will transpire that Bill Clinton of Arkansas and Barbra Streisand of New York grew up with a shared destiny—to validate each other's sense of specialness.) He completely lacks a sense of irony. He is not in the moment, he *is* the moment. (Again, he shares something with Ms. Streisand—as well as with young children.) Though lacking irony, he vibrates self-consciousness, straining always to project "aura" and appearing convinced that he is succeeding.

He is in over his head, however, and at the first signs of trouble he starts saying the kinds of things that mamas' boys always say. *I've worked like a dog . . . my motives are pure . . . I'm being treated so bad . . . people are mean . . . no one appreciates me.* Some psychic aspect of his manhood is missing—he knows it too—and so he follows his complaints with bold declarations of what he would "fight, indeed . . . die for." He squints one eye and issues warnings; he talks about "hanging tough." When nothing works and finally he must grope for guidance, he veers from pollsters to academicians to self-help king Tony Robbins. (Do any of them tell him the truth—that his consuming fear of rejection by those whom he would lead makes leadership impossible and rejection inevitable?) He is lost, lost as can be, and the distaste the public feels for him slides into embarrassment. The single most preposterous thing ever said about him will prove to be this: "Bill Clinton is incapable of sustained error."

And then there is his wife, who is as inscrutable as he is transparent. No one understands her—not now, not later—mainly because she tries to control, while claiming to discount, other people's opinions of her. She is humorless but hardworking, and she expends great effort trying to disguise her self-righteousness. Beneath her strangely unaffecting public face, she seems to trust no one. As a result, she lacks warmth (warmth being one product of faith in others), which will prove to be as politically detrimental to her as her husband's missing manhood is to him. She, too, is said to be highly intelligent ("smart as a whip," they keep repeating), but she must think her fellow citizens are not, for when they reject her idea of government-run health care, she says they have been manipulated, misinformed, duped. (How tediously predictable. For the whip-smart there are no failures, only misunderstandings.) Were she not in a position of authority and importance, she would be thought boring. And when *she* ends up in over her head, she turns for advice to gossip columnists, hoping to learn how to "make the public see her in the sympathetic, more complicated way in which she sees herself."



To which one can only respond with a question, the insistent, ever more resounding question that has followed her and her husband from the start: Who *are* these people? The answer, at this point, may be more trouble than it's worth. For the curious, however, there are several clues to go on.

It is December 1993, and Bill Clinton appears on the cover of *Rolling Stone* at the same moment Hillary Clinton does an interview and photo spread for *Vogue*—a pair of journalistic events

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whose combined effect is to make Americans feel as if they have suddenly awakened on Mars. Here is the President of the United States, hands in pockets and leg cocked, staring down from the *Rolling Stone* cover, looking like . . . like a boomer trying to look presidential while thinking, Hey, I'm on the cover of *Rolling Stone*! Inside is an interview in which the President uses the word "damn" many times, his tribute evidently to the hipness of his audience. He also speaks often and angrily of not getting credit for his accomplishments, saying, finally, "Do I care if I get credit? No." He returns again and again to the subject of a hated *Time* cover portrait, but then declares that "it didn't bother me very much . . . I didn't pay any attention to it." He volunteers that he has been "attacked" by the press "more often than any other President," then insists, "I don't care what they say about me." The total absence of emotional logic (*If I claim not to care about getting credit, does it make sense to complain constantly about not getting credit?*) makes the interview painful to read. Equally painful are the blushing responses of the interviewers, Jann Wenner and William Greider, who raise Clinton's ire and then swoon that he is, "when enraged, incredibly presidential." His wrath, they sigh, is "awesome." (This is the same Clinton temper that is reported on at length in books by Bob Woodward and Elizabeth Drew. The Clinton "purple rages" discussed in those books, the near-violent rants directed at helpless—and often innocent—underlings, do not come across as "incredibly presidential." On the contrary, they come across as ignoble, the manifestation of a stunted personality.)

While the President is singing his version of "Walk Like a Man" to *Rolling Stone*, Hillary is in *Vogue* trying to—well, it isn't clear what she is trying to do. One full-page photograph shows her posed horizontally, hair flowing back, eyes gazing skyward in feigned reverie, a half-smile on her face. The accompanying article discusses another pose—"chest forward, head back"—and goes on to quote an aide's comment prior to Mrs. Clinton's health care testimony before Congress: "This is Eleanor Roosevelt time." The whole thing is at once bizarre and utterly earnest (missing headline: "Hillary Perseveres Toward Glamour") and demonstrates in the end that the quickest way to look ridiculous is to behave as if you have charisma when you have none.

Why is it so hard to give these people, Bill Clinton and his wife, the benefit of the doubt? Why do the Clintons engender, as the media keep asking in high anxiety, such harshness of response? Perhaps because they lack humility and hence, paradoxically, size. Because they think so highly of themselves, they are too small for the honored positions they hold. They are without grace—a trueness of emotional line, a form of poise that has nothing to do with "self-confidence."

When Bill Clinton is alone in a room, does he know who he is? When Hillary Clinton is in a crowd of American citizens, does she know who she is? I don't think so, and it wouldn't matter except that they are using the presidency as a way *not* to find out, using it, that is, as a fame vehicle, a means of fantasy fulfillment.

This degradation of the office is not conscious, however; it is not a choice. It is simply the natural result of an inherent gaucherie that forces things exalted and things inconsequential into the same flattened category of "image." Perhaps the most telling example of this is reported by Elizabeth Drew in *On the Edge*, her horrifying account of the first 18 months of the Clinton presidency. During one of his endless crises (he will never grasp that habitual chaos is a form of self-indulgence), as he continues rapidly to lose public confidence and respect, Bill Clinton is counseled by Leon Panetta to keep in mind the "importance of the stature of the office." Accepting the point, Clinton responds, "I've got to be more like John Wayne."

John Wayne. Not Lincoln or Churchill, not Roosevelt or Truman. Not even Kennedy. The President of the United States, in a moment of political crisis, spontaneously seized as his leadership ideal not a historical archetype but a pop culture icon—an image, a persona, an invention. The banality of his thinking is revealed in his choice of a movie star as role model. The depth of his problem is suggested by the essence of that particular star: the strong silent type. Bill Clinton has nothing in common with the Duke. And all he has in common with John Wayne is that he makes his living pretending to be something he is not.

Janet Scott Barlow writes from Cincinnati.

LAW

The Stuffed Grape Leaf Standard

by Sarah J. McCarthy

Danger lurks everywhere these days, even in five gallon plastic tubs of feta cheese. The containers of feta delivered to our restaurant come embellished with sketches of a baby falling headfirst into a bucket of cheese, which is preserved in liquid, and therefore comes complete with grim warnings of possible drownings in English and Español. Has anyone really ever drowned in a tub of feta cheese, I wondered, as I stared at the toddler going head first into the bucket, or is this warning just the product of a paranoid cheese producer or a plastic pail maker who is afraid of being sued?

The federal government's Consumer Product Safety Commission, it turns out, has been studying the dangers of plastic buckets for the past five years. One of the solutions they came up with was a suggestion to manufacturers that they produce buckets that leak. That solution, swiftly rejected by the Manufacturers' Association, would produce slippery floors in our walk-in cooler, dry cheese on our salads, and icy floors each winter in the trucks that deliver the cheese.

Business owners are nervous these days. Like citizens of a police state, we wait for the knock at the door. Wendy's International thinks it's too risky to sell hot chocolate in America. The Russian Tea Room in New York City no longer sells steak tartare. The Las Vegas Hilton has been sent a message from the legal profession, which sends more messages to businesses these days than Western Union. For not recognizing that the partying pilots of Tailhook needed a babysitter, the Hilton has been fined $7 million in punitive damages in the first of 12 known Tailhook-related lawsuits.

In Pittsburgh, a woman has brought a $25,000 lawsuit against a supermarket which sold her a package of chicken complete with a chicken's head. Upon seeing the chicken head, she says she col-

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lapsed on the floor, became dysfunctional, and was unable to care for her children. A New Jersey lawyer has sued a coffee shop for causing his heart palpitations. It seems a waitress served him double espresso when he ordered decaf. A McDonald's in Albany has been sued for $600,000 by a woman who allegedly fell off a shifting toilet. And the jury that awarded $2.9 million to the lady who spilled hot coffee on herself while bounding along in her grandson's sportscar, and the judge who later reduced it to a mere $640,000, make restaurant owners think it's time to move somewhere business-friendly, like Red China or Iran.

Like people who never bother bending over to pick up a penny, those who run the legal system can't be bothered with nuisance lawsuits. Lawyers think that anything under six figures is jelly-jar change. In the funny-money world of the legal scam, where serious money flows like water and the plundering and pillaging of businesses occurs on a daily basis, $300,000 is viewed by these silver-tongued robber barons as a trivial sum. Ellen Vargyas, senior counsel at the National Women's Law Center, says the $300,000 damages awarded *per incident* to victims of sexual harassment as specified in the 1991 Civil Rights Act "are not exactly what I could call a pot of gold."

While businesspeople were running their businesses, the law schools of America were teaching lawyers like Ms. Vargyas how to stack a deck while dripping with moral sanctimony. Her scornful attitude reminds me of an old poker buddy of mine who would call a big pot by tossing his money on the table, contemptuously announcing, "I'd pay $300 to watch a dog pee!"

To me, $300,000 is not only a pot of gold, but equals the dollar bottom-line value of approximately 480,000 grape leaves, stuffed and rolled. When you roll and stuff grape leaves for a living, money has a way of taking on a new meaning. "Let's see, you mean if I lose this lawsuit, I will have to roll and stuff grape leaves, nonstop, from now until I'm 68?" It's like some diabolical punishment from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, one of those parables about the stages of hell where you're stuck doing for eternity that which you hate.

To protect ourselves from a sexual harassment lawsuit like the recent one at an Eat n' Park in Pittsburgh, where an impolite customer asked a waitress out too many times, we are planning to inscribe our bar stools with a warning to patrons: "Caution: Anyone sitting here too long may be subject to unwanted sexual advances." So far, no one in our bar crowd is taking the discussion seriously. Everyone laughs and says that's why they sit there in the first place. They just hope the harassment will come from someone they like. The problem is that what sounds funny to a bunch of barroom dart players at 2 A.M. is no laughing matter to a courtroom full of serious litigants and a kook-show jury. They have no sense of humor in criminal court.

I attended the sexual harassment trial of the Pittsburgh Sports Bar, where songs like "If I Only Had A Brain" from the *Wizard of Oz* were thought by the bartender to be all in fun. In Common Pleas Court, the singing of that song in front of a waitress was offered as evidence of a hostile environment, and no one, including the jury, thought it was funny. In fact, such songs can be actionable at $300,000 a pop. This bartender also thought it was OK to serve a tray of cheese to a waitress who had reported him for harassment. "Here, Debbie," he said, "have some cheese. Rat finks like cheese." This sentence became evidence of "retaliation" in court, also actionable at up to $300,000. The alleged harassment, which the owner knew nothing about, resulted in legal costs and fines of over $500,000. The owner was guilty by what is called the "should have known" standard, which states that an employer should know about everything that's occurred in his business. In the end, the Pittsburgh Sports Bar closed and 80 people lost their jobs, which many testified were the best jobs they ever had.

A legal system that is soft on crime and tough on business will produce fewer jobs and more crime. John J. Dilulio, professor of public affairs at Princeton, writes in the *Wall Street Journal* that Norma L. Shapiro, a Philadelphia judge is "one of the worst offenders among that influential cadre of federal judges who has trifled with public safety concerns. Some 67 percent of all defendants released because of her prison cap simply fail to appear in court. And in the past 18 months alone, 9,732 arrestees out on the streets on pretrial release because of the prison cap were arrested on second charges, including 79 murders, 90 rapes, 701 burglaries, 959 robberies, 1,113 assaults, 2,215 drug offenses, and 2,748 thefts."

Such mayhem is more dangerous to society than McDonald's coffee, but it's McDonald's that gets hit with jackpot damages. The prosecuting attorney said McDonald's had "known about these injuries for 15 years." The streets of America have been a hostile environment for at least that long, but who in the criminal justice system can citizens sue for inadequate security?

I wish I could offer some words of cheer to my fellow restaurant owners, relieve their fears, and reassure them that this is America and that good citizens have rights and aren't hauled off in the night and destroyed by their government, but it would be a lie. The only phrase that has meaning for us now, I'm afraid, is "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not out to get you."

Sarah J. McCarthy is a freelance writer and co-owner of Amel's Restaurant in Pittsburgh.

EUROPE

Homo Sovieticus Lives On

by Tomislav Sunic

To the old popular proverb, "The only good communist is a dead communist," we should perhaps now add: "Once a communist, forever a communist." Although as a muscled ideology communism is dead, as a way of life it is still very much alive. Similar to any other past and present mass belief or theology, communism in Eastern Europe and Russia also managed to create distinct social species whose behavior radically differs from liberal species in the West. History may tell us soon whether *homo sovieticus* has been a more durable species than his mollified Western counterpart, known as *homo economicus*.

Although the communist monolith has been replaced in Eastern Europe and Russia by democratic legal structures, and despite incessant anticommunist

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rhetoric from the new political elites, communist culture continues to hold a firm grip over a large number of officials and ordinary people. Sure, the old communist iconography, such as the hammer and sickle, accompanied by the ever-present red star, have been replaced by new nationalist symbols, but the substance of the old communist culture in day-to-day life remains shockingly the same.

What strikes a Western visitor during his sojourn in Eastern Europe is that citizens continue to behave and respond to the new noncommunist social environment in the same old "communistic" way. Words like "democracy," "tolerance," "pluralism," "parliamentarianism" are endlessly regurgitated on all wavelengths, but in most cases these words amount to empty rhetoric which in no way reflects substantive change in popular and political behavior. A good observer quickly notices that citizens in postcommunist Dresden, Zagreb, Bucharest, Prague, or Moscow display the same old behavioral traits that they inherited from their respective communist systems. In short, despite the political collapse of communism, citizens in postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia cling to old defensive mechanisms that now prevent them from coping with the challenge of democracy.

It cannot be denied that mass terror, which not long ago took its tremendous toll in communist states, led to the destruction of individuals who would now be indispensable for leadership and the upholding of new noncommunist social and ethical values. The decades-long terror, accompanied by the social and cultural leveling of the masses, resulted in the physical removal of a number of gifted individuals, and in the subsequent imposition of the culture of mendacity and social mediocrity. Alexander Zinoviev, a respected Russian author who still lives in German exile, accurately predicted that communism, as a system of perfect democratic pathology, will live on, Gorbachev, Yeltsin and company notwithstanding.

Western observers committed a grave mistake by attributing communist terror only to a small bunch of *apparatchiks*, who entered Western textbooks by the name of "red *nomenklatura*." In reality, however, mass terror was a way of life which enlisted broad popular support and in which almost every citizen living in a communist country indulged—of course, within his sphere of social influence and his position in the social hierarchy. Thus, absenteeism and shoddy work was considered morally acceptable by simple factory workers, and embezzlement on a large scale was viewed as perfectly legal by high-ranking communist hacks. Paradoxically, the communist elites had to allow noncommunist employees and workers to pilfer in order to legitimize their own grand-scale theft. "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," wrote Karl Marx. Contrary to some assumptions, communism in Eastern Europe and Russia was not an illicit departure from the Marxist credo, but its full implementation.

As communist systems consolidated during the Cold War, the masses in Eastern Europe and Russia learned little by little how to cultivate their lowest instincts of survivability. "Nobody can pay me as little as little I can work" became the unwritten slogan of millions of ordinary citizens from the Baltics to the Balkans, leading, predictably, 50 years later, to the political entropy of the system and its subsequent legal demise. Yet this slogan and its biological carrier *homo sovieticus* still live on with surprising tenacity.

Undoubtedly, despite demonstrable economic and political inefficiency and daily drudgery, former communist countries, unlike the unpredictable market-oriented West, offered psychological security and economic predictability to their citizens—albeit security and predictability of a very Spartan and frugal kind. But who cares about the philosophical meaning of liberty, as long as social survivability can be guaranteed in a mass society of scarce means? It must, therefore, not come as a surprise that citizens in today's postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia find it difficult to cope with the Western capitalist ethos of responsibility, commitment, and cutthroat work. There is a widespread belief among many Eastern Europeans today that democracy means only lots of leisure, lots of money, and little work.

Many foreign observers who visit Eastern Europe complain about the impossibility of communicating with local citizens. This communication breakdown is primarily due to the fact that Eastern Europeans assign different meanings to social concepts. Undoubtedly, millions of them are well aware of the Gulag legacy and the mandatory "wooden language" that they were forced to use. Yet, it must not be forgotten that masses in Eastern Europe today are oblivious to this legacy, preferring instead to think about the rise of their living standard, which is, alas, nowhere in sight. Hence this unusual nostalgia about the recent communist past, which recently manifested itself in the recent political success of neocommunists in Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary.

As a perfect form of totalitarian democracy, communist terror essentially operated according to the unwritten laws of dispersed egalitarian guilt in which all citizens actively participated. Thus it is impossible today to try former communist bosses without also bringing to trial their hidden helpers. As Mikhail Heller and Robert Conquest noted, communist terror essentially borrowed from the little tyrant who lies in every human being, thereby setting one person against the other, creating a quasi state of nature, in which low-key total war of all against all constantly and brutally raged. Under communism the majority oppressed the minority, and not the other way around; everybody tried to outfox and outsmart everybody else, or prove that he can better pilfer or cut corners than his comrade coworker in arms. Clearly, Stalin, Tito, Ceausescu, Kadar, and other communist tyrants would never have been able to carry out large-scale massacres and decades-long repression without the hidden help of millions of unknown little "Stalins." Was this not the perfect outcome of democracy, brought to its egalitarian pinnacle?

Absolute servility toward communist superiors was another unwritten rule for everybody, so that everyone, according to his hierarchical spot, could exercise his own "bossism" toward his inferiors. Every citizen, within his sphere of life and social influence, played a little Jekyll and Hyde; everybody spied on each other; everybody played a game of make-believe; and everybody took advantage of each other's personal weaknesses. Upon joining a "workers' collective," each person became a transparent being, with no privacy, and was closely scrutinized by his coworkers, yet at the same time he enjoyed total communal protection in case of professional mistakes, absenteeism, or shoddy work. This is something unimaginable in the capitalist West.

The tragic side of postcommunist Eastern Europe is that many of its citizens are unable to shed the inherited

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communist culture, despite the fact that many of them identify themselves as ardent anticommunists. Life in the new noncommunist Eastern Europe, which requires risk and imposes competition, is hard for many natives to swallow. Wide segments of the population continue to display the same old servility toward their democratically elected or chosen superiors. The old communist practice of double deals and paranoid fear that everybody is plotting against everybody, and that one may become the target of the government's wrath, is widespread. Conspiracy theories abound; there are unofficial rumors about dark and hidden forces—perhaps involving some inexplicable foreign fifth column or a proverbial "Jew"—which are responsible for the economic hardships. It should not come as a surprise that such a conspiracy-prone environment is suitable for obscure Western organizations, such as the Schiller Institute or the Unification Church, which seem to be quite active in this part of the disabused and disenchanted Europe.

The lack of self-confidence and initiative seem to be another aspect of the Eastern European drama. In new institutions and political life similar to the old communist ones, everything must be approved by superiors, every minor detail needs to have a stamp by a high government official. Also, the newly established party pluralism frequently borders on the grotesque, because the multitude of newly emerged political parties, in their passionate drive to imitate the West, often strive to prove that they know more about democracy and free markets than Westerners themselves.

Growing economic hardship, coupled with the uncertain geopolitical situation which is being rocked by ethnic turmoil, actually provides many Eastern Europeans with an excuse for their own incompetence and psychological paralysis. Undoubtedly, citizens in Eastern Europe enjoy today a great deal of media freedom, probably more so than the "politically correct" and self-censored liberal West, but their mindset and patterns of communication remain the same as under communism. Small wonder that the loss of security and economic predictability that accompanied the demise of communism and the rise of privatization and the free market is creating a dangerous psychological void, which will most likely, in the very near future, result in yet another totalitarian temptation.

Metaphorically speaking, citizens in Eastern Europe wish to retain the inherited communist laziness and graft onto it the liberal glitter of the Western shopping malls. The communist spirit, as a perfect incarnation of democratic totalitarianism, has not lost much of its psychological attractiveness. *Homo sovieticus* clearly lives on.

Tomislav Sunic's new book is Dissidence and Titoism *(Peter Lang). He currently serves in the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*

When East Meets West

by Thomas Molnar

With every passing day the Eastern European countries are absorbed and integrated into Western-sponsored international institutions—the U.N., NATO, the European Union, the World Bank, etc. For Warsaw, Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, and Kiev, the West represents the light at the end of the tunnel, the gate to salvation. It is funny (tragic) to see: while the West, from the perspective of its consumer-citizens, is increasingly a degenerate piece of geography, for the recent escapees from communism it is the Land of Plenty, Eldorado combined with a Pays de Cocagne, the end of history, the plenitude of Culture. Fukuyama ought to travel there in order to replenish his waning optimism.

This desire to join "Europe" and the Atlantic community grows obsessive as the national and regional problems—misery, ethnic conflicts, the migration issue, the collapse of infrastructure—swell to unmanageable proportions. No amount of foreign aid, investment, peace talks, and membership cards can stem the flood of difficulties; not, mind you, because of Soviet occupation and devastation alone, but also because of the weight of history and the heritage of Turks, Habsburgs, Russians, and other colonizers. Upon the colonizers, one ought not to underestimate the subtle *mainmise* of the modern West, both economic and cultural, which has led to a lazy and cynical mentality, a justification of the "it is useless anyway" attitude. The number of times these countries have been betrayed by the West masked as Santa Claus is astronomical, and if this is not quite so in fact, it remains so in the citizen's mind.

The nth Balkan war, the present one, is only the most recent betrayal, with its pseudo-arbitrations and embargoes. Other betrayals were Budapest in 1956, then Prague, then Danzig—and before them Yalta, Versailles, Wilson and Clemenceau, and so on, way back into the past. And quite recently, too: it is known that the collapse of the Berlin Wall was a trauma for Paris and London, an embarrassment for the entire West. Who wants legions of beggars to knock at the gates and offer narcotics, nuclear devices, and unwanted products?

In short, the lifting of the Iron Curtain has been the source of serial dramas, with actors immobilized before 1989, who now assume their roles. True, the cry to "Join the West!" (from Bill Clinton as much as Michael Jackson) seems to satisfy the eagerness to escape the past; yet this "integration" will solve nothing, while creating immense disappointments; either integration will not deliver according to expectations, or it will add new woes typical of Western societies to the already unsolvable local problems. Integration comes to resemble the lemmings' suicide march.

Yet—the eternal paradox—there are also many signs of health in Eastern Europe, without Western do-goodism and interference. Some things work, and, amazingly, worked under the previous regime too, by the sheer power of tradition, subtle resistance, solidarity, and at times a sense of the human on the part of Marxist bureaucrats themselves. Schools and curricula, church institutions, national loyalty, the consciousness of being part of Europe, the lively sources of folk art, and, above all else, literature and its tradition—these were and remained the positive elements. If these nations have a future, it is because the liberal and progressive concepts have not eaten themselves into their fabric, but have been cordoned off to big cities and a small percentage of their population.

To say this, of course, provokes controversy, if not acerbic accusations. It is the foremost taboo subject. Nevertheless, it is important to assert that the generally Western ideology of liberal democracy, globalism, and rootless culture is what today poisons the work of reconstruction. After a century of Marxist and various utopian dreams, and evil philoso-

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phies taught in schools, it is clear that Eastern Europe will either be saved by its traditions—yes, including ethnic self-affirmations—or will go under for centuries, under the burden of so-called Western values. The safely living and happily consuming West simply does not grasp the primacy of national identity as a source of survival and will to live. The ever-present hostile elements in the East cannot be canceled by treaties and summits.

Over a period of a hundred years or so (roughly from 1848 to 1949, from modernization to a modicum of prosperity) the nations of Eastern Europe were allowed to acquire muscle, to develop a middle class, to mix in a rather healthy way its historical tradition with the opening to the West. This positive evolution, with promoters and resisters balanced, rested on history and nationhood, on pride in achievement, whether artistic, religious, urbanistic, or military. In the last half-century, communism as well as the general drift of modernity have wiped out the middle class and outlawed national pride. Writers, thinkers, painters, and priests have either been totally silenced or constrained by this or that political correctness. It is a miracle that much of the earlier consciousness survived; in fact, one meets it at every step, tattered, worn, humiliated—but alive! In high school classes, at religious gatherings, in academies, at dinners with scintillating poets, patriots, publishers, professors—and in nostalgic "average citizens."

The tragedy today, and for years to come, is that this virile heritage that refused to die and even to wither under communism is now encountering a dry and bureaucratic, materialistic and commercial, degenerate Western import, which impresses people not by truth or virtue, but by the outpouring of vulgar publicity and degrading merchandise. The neobourgeoisie now in evidence above layers and layers of miserable and exhausted grey masses is thus not an organic successor of the old one, but a sociological stratum in expansion, with the cultural features of the proletariat in Dickens and Zola. The old values find themselves suddenly neutralized in waves of postcommunist anarchy. The great and central question is whether the old nations and their ordering principle of reality and imagination will survive or succumb to a cosmopolitan ideology.

In the main, Eastern Europe has followed, since 1848, the Russian pattern of indecision between *populists* and *Westernizers*, Bakunin and Herzen, Dostoyevsky and Turgenev, Stalin and Trotsky, Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov. The strange thing is that under Bolshevik rule a combination won out, with the worst from each. This is a natural development in the ex-satellite countries and in Russia itself. For the moment, the tug of war is between equally strong militants on both sides: between nationalism, also in its populist version, and the socialist-liberal left (contrary to my friends on the right, it is not a communist comeback, but hardly less dangerous for nationhood), with the left complaining that the right is "fascist." But one cannot underestimate the force of inertia on either side: the liberals advocate cosmopolitan values which are alien except to the world of artists, students, journalists, and part of the ambitious political class; the nationals have deep roots but misjudge the genuine forces of a necessary modernization. In sum, the observer witnesses a replay of an old game. The left constitutes a small, city-based minority, but it knows how to spread its theories and slogans since it owns or browbeats the publishing houses, the newspapers, the intellectual magazines. It has a near-monopoly on attractive ideas, it defines the consensus on television. The right trusts people's common sense and believes that "truth wins out." It consequently neglects the media and engages instead in whispering campaigns. Since it typically loses (elections, popularity polls, academic posts), the right often finds consolation in vast conspiracy theories. "Have you read *the* book by X? He tells it all. *They* plan a final takeover of the regime, of television, of the banks . . ."

While the liberal left thus prepares the ground in small moves, the right retreats and sulks. Society itself, deprived of leadership, makes its choices pragmatically, according to its interests of the moment. One may find comfort in the thought that the infightings are known to all modern democracies, and one may even rejoice over the right-left conflicts in African "democracies" as well. But in Eastern Europe, democracy is and will remain an import article, and will turn into a vicious brawl. The stake is, of course, power, but since we speak of impecunious societies, the stake is naked financial gain—and Swiss bank accounts.

Eastern Europe is in many respects at a crossroads—where the roads may lead somewhere, anywhere, possibly to chaos. The shipwreck of the middle class—officers, civil servants, teachers, entrepreneurs, publishers, the steadily employed—resulted not merely in an all-too-frequent vacuum, but also in a nihilistic mood. These countries now simultaneously suffer the pangs of independence, of social restructuring, of economic upmanship, and of national consolidation. These, plus the burdened soul of the recent past, create a general distrust, limitless ambitions (also called the free market), and vast corruption at every level. Western influence and pressure arrive at the wrong time, since the problems, East and West, have little in common, yet the remedies applied under foreign pressure tend to be uniform from the Volga to the Danube. The remedies—democracy, free market, and human rights—are literally meaningless words and phrases without a background and space for validation. They are, alas, just enough to prevent the rise of a patriotic and culturally efficient class of leaders. But even if such emerged it would be stamped "reactionary" and excluded by those who claim precisely pluralism as their virtue.

Just about the only Western slogan not used in the region—"political correctness" is already doing its devastating job—is "globalism," since all preoccupations are strictly local. Its place is taken by "geopolitics," which compels the leaders to adopt a degree of realism. And the nature of the realism is an orientation toward Germany, as the Bosnian tragedy demonstrates every day. The fear of Russia is very much alive, and Western Europe disappoints newspaper readers daily. At the December summit in Budapest, Clinton struck people with his lack of color and personality, as even Yeltsin marginalized him. Mitterrand was judged as being out of the game, with his self-administered funeral oration; and John Major was visibly ill at ease with his troubles at home. Some regional politicians looked to Italy for leadership—a tradition south of the Danube—but they had to acknowledge that Helmut Kohl alone made the impression of power. As I recently wrote, history in Eastern Europe appears to flow backward.

But at least history dictates the same policies to the entire region: all countries have, at the recent elections, returned a socialist government, disavowing liber-

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als, Christians, agrarians, and partisans of the Western model. Emphatically, the returned parties are not communist, although they retain certain familiar features: a predilection for centralism, a rougher tone vis-à-vis the West (whose weakness they detect better than the liberals), a tougher trade and customs policy, and a more forceful insistence on reducing the debilitating foreign debt—contracted in the past by the communists!

None of this cancels the ills mentioned earlier, but it does signal a greater social discipline. Watching the situation in Hungary at the end of 1994 and comparing it with that of the year before, I found that a once-rebellious public now submitted almost meekly to the government's decisions, for example against strikers. And they meekly submitted even when these decisions hurt, like the steep increase in the price of foodstuff and fuel. Let's be cynical: Was it because the media, one after another, passed into government hands?

Thomas Molnar's latest book is
The Emerging Atlantic Culture
(Transaction).

PROPAGANDA

Soviet Spies and Agents of Influence

by Arnold Beichman

Probably the greatest triumph in public opinion manipulation in modern history was the West's elevation of the Soviet Union into a symbol of righteousness and a country beyond criticism. This triumph was all the more notable because from day one of the Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin's system, to quote Robert Conquest, "had as one of its main characteristics falsification on an enormous scale."

This successful manipulation of Western public opinion was made possible because of Soviet penetration of Western journalism and the academy and the political culture of the Western democracies. The British public, for example, was recently in a flap over the revelation in the London *Spectator* that one of Britain's distinguished dailies, the *Guardian*, had as an editor an admitted Soviet spy who took money from the KGB. In resigning from the newspaper, the editor, Richard Gott, admitted he had taken the money but said it was only for travel expenses to European cities to meet a Soviet official sent from Moscow. His admission that he took these secret KGB payments, of course, taints his demurrers. The KGB does not hand out money except for services rendered, as Aldrich Ames and other KGB spies have testified.

The British press has also opened up about British citizens who were recipients of Soviet subsidies not for actual spying but for acting as propagandists for the Soviet cause, as agents of influence. In time, American public opinion will also demand to know who our agents of influence were during the Cold War, those Americans who were always ready in the name of world peace or socialism to explain away Soviet or Maoist atrocities and in the process to denounce anti-communism as Cold War propaganda.

The self-willed assignment of such agents of influence was not necessarily to act as spies for the Soviet Union, as Kim Philby or Alger Hiss did, but under a cloak of innocent respectability to exploit their prestige and moral authority in support of Soviet actions, particularly in foreign policy. Some of these agents of influence were probably on a KGB payroll; others, businessmen like Armand Hammer, were on a different kind of "payroll." They benefited financially from their Soviet connection and still others, true believers, were unwitting agents of influence.

That the United States had a plethora of such agents during the Cold War is undeniable. Even without any KGB archival revelations, there is no question that men like Vice President Henry A. Wallace or American ambassador to the Soviet Union Joseph Davies were, in every awful sense of the phrase, witting agents of influence, whose apologies for Soviet foreign policy were helpful to the enemy's cause.

Hollywood even took Davies' pro-Stalin book *Mission to Moscow*, and with the help of Warner Brothers turned it into one of the sleaziest pro-Soviet propaganda films ever made outside the Soviet Union. Later in 1946, Davies, ever the Soviet agent of influence, said in an Associated Press interview: "Russia in self-defense has every moral right to seek atomic-bomb secrets through military espionage if excluded from such information by her former fighting allies." For helping Russia to exercise that "moral right," as Davies called it, spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg went to the electric chair.

While Wallace and Davies were witting agents of influence, Harry Hopkins, on the other hand, was probably an *unwitting* agent of influence. Here is what Mr. Hopkins, probably the advisor closest to President Roosevelt during the war years, said in 1945, after the calamitous Yalta conference: "In our hearts we really believed a new day had dawned. . . . The Russians had proved that they could be reasonable and farsighted and neither the President nor any one of us had the slightest doubt that we could live with them and get on peaceably with them far into the future."

Regarding Henry Wallace, we will one day have to decide what role he really played during Stalin's reign. From my studies of his career as wartime Vice President, there is no question that Wallace was *the* preeminent witting agent of influence whose political activities served the Soviet cause to an extraordinary degree. One shudders to think what might have happened had President Roosevelt, running for a fourth term in 1944, allowed Wallace to remain on the Democratic ticket as his running-mate instead of switching to Harry Truman.

As Secretary of Commerce, until Truman fired him in 1946, as well as in the years thereafter, Wallace engaged in so many pro-Soviet activities—defending the 1948 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, running for President in 1948 as the candidate of the openly Communist-controlled Progressive Party—that there is no escaping the conclusion that Wallace was an ally of Joseph Stalin. Wallace did not break with Moscow until 1950, when he blamed the Soviet Union for instigating North Korea's aggression against South Korea.

In the realm of journalism, long before the *Guardian*'s Richard Gott, there was another agent of influence of British origin, Walter Duranty, the Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* correspondent. He and others like him in the early years of the Soviet Union concealed the truth about what is today recognized

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as one of the most inhuman dictatorships of modern times, exceeding even Nazi Germany in its barbarities. There was another *New York Times* correspondent, Max Frankel, who after years in Moscow wrote: "The 'greatest story in the world' is also the greatest secret in the world. And the lone correspondent is a poor match for a giant, totalitarian government. The story is only rarely to be had on the scene. The scholars will have to dig out what really happened." What really happened! In other words, what Western correspondents, including Frankel himself, had been reporting about the Soviet Union to democratic publics over the years was either untrue, half-true, or meaningless.

Lying about the Soviet Union was made legitimate because it was supposedly done on behalf of a higher truth. When asked what he was going to write about the Stalin-induced Russian famine, Duranty replied: "Nothing. What are a few million dead Russians in a situation like this? Quite unimportant. This is just an incident in the sweeping historical changes here. I think the entire matter is exaggerated." It was not until 1990 that a *Times* editorial described Duranty's coverage as "some of the worst reporting to appear in this newspaper."

Beatrice and Sidney Webb, in their corrupt two-volume tract about the Soviet Union, described in these words Stalin's organized famine against the Ukraine peasantry in the winter of 1932, when between five and seven million people died: "Strong must have been the faith and resolute the will of the men who, in the interest of what seemed to them the public good, could take so momentous a decision."

As recently as 1987, KGB propaganda found its way into the American media. When the Soviet Union accused the United States of introducing AIDS as part of its alleged biological warfare research, Dan Rather—March 30, 1987—played this smear as news and offered no evidence other than the Soviet report. A year earlier, Stuart H. Loory, then CNN Moscow bureau chief, wrote in a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* (February 3, 1986): "I can say without reservation that if the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were to submit itself to the kind of free elections held in South Vietnam in the 1960's or El Salvador in the 1980's, it would win an overwhelming mandate. . . . Except for small pockets of resistance to the Communist regime, the people have been truly converted in the past 68 years."

In his 1994 book about the Cold War, Martin Walker, Washington correspondent of the British *Guardian* and earlier its Moscow correspondent, writes:

> The similarities between Moscow in the early 1980's and Washington in the early 1990's became eerily acute to one who had lived through both. The contrast between the former Soviet Union's release of its prisoners and the way that the U.S.A. had over one million of its citizens incarcerated, summoned the bizarre, dismaying thought of an American Gulag.

With the accession, following the death of Leonid Brezhnev in 1982, of Yuri V. Andropov as the ruling strongman of the Soviet Union, the credulity of the Western press became scandalous. Andropov, known in Hungary as the Butcher of Budapest for his infamous role during the 1956 Hungarian uprising and a longtime chief of the KGB, instantly became the beneficiary of a disinformation campaign which the American press lapped up with squeals of delight. Andropov was a "bibliophile," a "connoisseur of modern art," enjoyed American novels. The ineffable *Washington Post* described Andropov as a man "fond of cynical political jokes with an anti-regime twist . . . collects abstract art, likes jazz and Gypsy music [and] has a record of stepping out of his high party official's cocoon to contact dissidents." He also swam, played tennis, danced the tango gracefully. Even the *Wall Street Journal* fell for this disinformation campaign. Andropov, it reported, "likes Glenn Miller records, good Scotch whiskey, Oriental rugs, American books." The *New York Times* and *Time* magazine also fell for this tripe, which included a revelation that Andropov "had a strange attraction for Western culture." It will be remembered that it was during the Andropov reign that KAL 007 was shot down.

But it was not only influential Western journalism that failed to tell the truth about the Soviet Union. One of the great intellectual failures of this century has been the failure of distinguished scholars—political scientists, historians, philosophers, sociologists, many of them teachers at prestigious universities—to apply the standards of truth to their research into the Soviet Union and communism itself. As a result of their falsehoods camouflaged as "research," a fictitious Soviet Union and an equally fictitious People's Republic of China as utopias-in-being were created for Western policymakers. The relationship between the lies of academe and the extermination of millions of people within Soviet borders, in Eastern Europe, in China and Southeast Asia may be causal or coincidental, but there is no question that communist totalitarianism benefited from at least 50 years of academic indulgence and willful credulity. And of course, this lying went a long way to transforming Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, Ché Guevara, and the Sandinistas into nation-building democrats.

The Soviet archives hold many secrets, none as important as the possible disclosure of the names of those who, while posing as friends of democracy, knowingly allied themselves with the foulest dictatorship in human history.

Arnold Beichman is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and author of Anti-American Myths: Their Causes and Consequences.

CLASSICS

Homer Nods

by William F. Wyatt

The author David Halberstam gave the principal address at the convocation opening Brown's 1994-95 academic year. Time was when only the president of the university spoke, but recent presidents have instituted the policy of having a distinguished visitor give the main address. Halberstam is indeed a distinguished man with many significant books to his credit. Perhaps he will not mind being compared with Homer.

"Homer sometimes nods" is the way *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* reports the expression, which goes back to Horace's *Ars Poetica*. I had always heard: "even Homer nods." No matter,

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for both amount to much the same thing—even the best of authors can occasionally create a weak poem or line or make a mistake. I think we can all grant this, but some critics have taken the expression literally, and have sought out cases in which Homer in fact nods: i.e., contradicts either himself or common sense.

Such observers point with glee at the fact—as they would have it—that in his *Iliad,* Homer has Pylaimenes, a Trojan warrior slain in Book Five, return to weep for the death of his son in Book Thirteen. They chortle to think that the hero Achilles can forget in the course of a day—and but two books later—that an embassy of his friends had come to him the previous evening to beg him to return to battle. They become nearly hysterical when contemplating "blameless Aegisthus," the Aegisthus who seduced Clytaemnestra and murdered Agamemnon; and are helpless with laughter when Homer endows Odysseus' faithful wife Penelope with a "massive forearm."

Homer's defenders have ridden to the rescue. Already in antiquity scholars commented on Pylaimenes' death and resurrection, and concluded that the text was faulty and Homer innocent of contradiction. It has been suggested that Achilles is not so much forgetful as Homer is (a bit) careless in conflating two versions of his *Iliad* into one—one story with the embassy, another without. Besides, it is argued, the poem was composed orally for a live audience, and such audiences are not likely to notice minor inconsistencies. Aegisthus and Penelope are victims not of Homeric ignorance or innocence but of the formulaic nature of Homeric composition. Homer was forced by the exigencies of rapid composition to use fixed phrases for certain characters even when they run counter to the best sense.

These defenses of Homer are often as weak as the attacks made on him. It would perhaps be well in this connection to remember what Horace in fact said (Epistles 2, 33: 59-60):

Et idem
Indignor quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.
Verum operi longo fas est obrepere somnum.

"Even I take it amiss when expert Homer nods for a moment,
but it is excusable that sleep creeps up if a work is long."

Horace expects Homer to be perfect, and is annoyed when he is not. His only explanation for Homeric lapses is the length of the work.

All the above is pedantry at worst, scholarship at best, and I would not have bothered with it had a recent example of nodding not presented itself in Halberstam's well-received book *The Fifties.* Interestingly enough (to me) Halberstam has erred in the same ways Homer did. And Horace's excuse will do here as well, for the book is indeed very long.

On page 11 Halberstam writes: "A man named Whittaker Chambers . . . charged that Hiss . . . " evidently forgetting that he had written on page 10: "Whittaker Chambers, who would be the key witness against Alger Hiss . . . " The phrase "a man named" implies that we are meeting him for the first time. Shades of Achilles. Of course, he may be quoting Hiss's own words: "I never knew a man called Whittaker Chambers"—without using quotation marks, hence using a formulaic utterance in a place where that formula is inappropriate. On page 800 it is clearly a formulaic use of language that has led him astray: "As I became aware of the vast press corps which was arriving in Tallahatchie County to cover the case, I knew instinctively that something important was taking place." He of course did not know it instinctively; he had deduced from experience that a large number of reporters implies a story worth covering. Observation and intelligence, not instinct, guided him. He has been led to use the formula "to know instinctively" in a sentence to which it is not appropriate.

Formulaic language has misled Halberstam in the 20th century, in spite of all our age's mechanical marvels and its squadrons of editors and typesetters. Homer was on his own, performing live before audiences and without the aid of writing (probably). We have no reason to believe that Homer's original audiences found fault with his poem. It was only later scholars who noted the difficulties. Chances are also that only those acquainted with Homeric scholarship have noticed the lapses in *The Fifties.*

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LIBERAL ARTS

THE NEW UNTOUCHABLES

For Americans in Arlington, Virginia, it is a little aggravating that our brothers near the Mexican border in California get all the publicity when it comes to illegal aliens. You would think California is the only state that has a problem.

It's not. According to the *Arlington Courier,* the Immigration and Naturalization Service admitted that the problem of illegal immigration in Northern Virginia is becoming worse, not better. "We've almost lost control of the situation," said INS district director William Carroll. "To pick up every undocumented alien would be almost impossible." Arlington County board member Ben Winslow agreed: "We are being invaded . . . and we are losing the battle."

Indeed Arlington is. Gangs such as *La Mara Loco Intocables* (The Crazy Untouchables) are chock full of illegal aliens whose relatives and friends bounce like jumping beans whenever cops apprehend gang members in the county illegally.

The sad thing is, the INS director just doesn't get it. The Golden State's Proposition 187, he says, is "a xenophobic kind of thing." Presumably, Arlingtonians who do not like illegal immigrants are xenophobes, too.

—*R. Cort Kirkwood*

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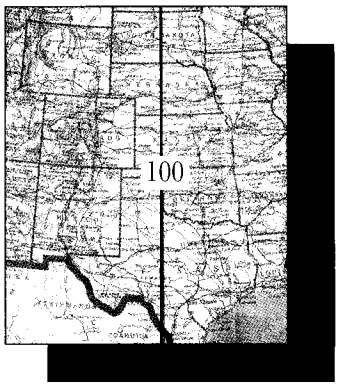
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Navajoland: I



In the American Southwest nothing looks to be of a piece but the landscape and the infinity of sky overhead. The vast frame of the earth and the geomorphic scheme that shaped it lie plainly revealed through a scrim of sparse vegetation so that a single landmark is sufficient to supply, organize, and integrate in the imagination a multitude of associated topographic features enabling it to reconstruct the sweeps of geological space that both separate and connect them. The southwestern landscape is not only recognizably of a piece, it can be held as such within the mind. The Navajo Reservation, home of the Dineh (meaning "Earth People"), comprises 26 million acres located in three states between four peaks rising from the four points of the compass: Debentsa in the La Plata Mountains of Colorado, an elevation between Colorado's Blanco Peak and Pelado in the Jemez Range in New Mexico, Mt. Taylor near present-day Grants, New Mexico, and the San Francisco Mountains north of Flagstaff, Arizona; all of them believed by the Navajos to be formed of earth brought from the underworld by the Dineh and their elder brothers, who in ancient times wore the shapes of men, after their emergence into the upper one in the vicinity of the modern town of Silverton, Colorado. The Papago Reservation is as lovely but, being much smaller, offers far less variety of terrain and vegetation.

As the highway north from Flagstaff descended the forested benches that pedestal the San Franciscos, the heat increased with the stony aridity of the country. Dust devils spun beside the road and a column of pink dust, incandescent in the afternoon sun and taller than Elijah's whirlwind, rose thousands of feet into a cyanic sky. At intervals a trailer home appeared or a modest house built of cinderblock, each surrounded by a brush corral and the sacred hogan built as a representation of the cosmos, its door facing toward the rising sun. Some of these hogans were no more than poles covered with dirt and resembling gigantic anthills, others octagons of carefully fitted planks and logs; a few were sheeted with tarpaper. Late model pickup trucks stood parked on the packed dirt around the front doors, and beside every third or fourth house a satellite dish cupped itself to the clairvoyant sky like a patient attentive ear. Few sheep and range cattle wandered in this country the color of blood, half submerged in the pink drifting sand of its own pulverizing rock; a single pitiably starved horse stood along the right-of-way with its penis extended, looking near death. Where booths of brush and board painted with the word "Jewelry" leaned against the fencelines, the belagaana tourists (some students believe the word represents the Navajos' early approximation of "American") in play clothes pawed among silver and turquoise trinkets under the deadpan faces of the traditionally dressed Indian women. Tuba City had been described to me as "the biggest Third World City in the Southwest" by someone who obviously had never visited the place. The town was founded in the latter part of the 19th century by Mormon pioneers invited to the site by a Hopi from the village of Oraibi named Tuvi (meaning Outcast) who wished to make his own settlement at nearby Moencopi secure against the Paiutes. It was originally called Koechaktewa (White Sands), but the Mormons changed the name to Tuba City in honor of their good friend Tuvi. Today Tuba City is a collection of mobile homes arranged irregularly among the sand dunes along a four-lane highway with turnouts to the shopping centers, gas stations, and nationally franchised eateries patronized by the hordes of Illinoisans, Californians, and Virginians who pass through every summer on their way to visit the Grand Canyon, which appears in cross-section on the Western horizon. With 5,000 residents, Tuba City is slightly larger than the Navajo capital of Window Rock at the opposite eastern end of the reservation. At the Ya-Tah-Ay chain store close by the city dump I placed a call to George Hardeen for directions out to his trailer at the edge of town.

George Hardeen said, "I'm really hooked on this part of the country. Everybody's poor here, nobody has any money. And I like the isolation of the res." George had on hiking shorts and shoes, and his backpack lay on the carpet with its contents spread around his feet. The bay window in the side of the trailer faced the Tuba City Airport's single runway where an incoming ambulance plane had recently crashed after hitting two horses (in Navajo "those that men live by") and decapitating one of them. George said that the Navajos are uncooperative in keeping their livestock off the runway, but expert at shooting out the landing lights along the strip. Before moving onto the reservation to work for the *Navajo Times* in Window Rock and later for the *Gallup Independent* in Gallup, New Mexico, he had been a newspaperman in Page, Arizona, whence he had migrated from a previous newspaper job in Missoula, Montana. By birth he is a Connecticut Yankee. His parents came out from Connecticut for his wedding in Tuba City and have not been back since: "on account of the heat," they say.

It was not, in late June, very hot yet but a hard wind out of the stretched blue sky beat against the tin skin of the trailer. While Lena Hardeen washed the breakfast dishes her cousin, a tall keen-faced young Navajo, put aside the books he had been studying in preparation for his college examinations to sit at the dining table with the baby Christopher on his lap. The framed photograph on the wall behind him showed Annie Dodge Wannetka, a Navajo stateswoman to whom President Kennedy awarded the Congressional Medal of Freedom and for whom Lena had worked as an intern. George and I were trying to get away together on a hiking trip, but there had been delays. Another of Lena's relatives, also a young man earning college money by working construction on a chocolate

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factory going up in Las Vegas, had stopped by; finally a slim and pretty woman named Bette—the journalist who had broken the Big Boquillas Ranch story that launched the payoff scandal that forced Tribal Chairman Peter McDonald from office—showed up, and Lena brewed a pot of fresh coffee. George had begun to refill the pack with the items we needed for the trip when a shabby brown Toyota sedan pulled in beside the trailer. "It's Lena's mom," he said around the bungee cord he held in his teeth. "Don't you have to be somewhere?" "What do you mean?" "The mother-in-law taboo." In traditional Navajo culture mother- and son-in-law are not permitted each other's company, or even vicinity, and they are not supposed to look at one another at all. George laughed. "We like to kid each other about that."

The old lady entered from the little porch followed by a tall slender boy with very long bare brown legs. She was dressed in traditional style, wearing the many-layered skirt of pale gray silk, green velvet blouse (worn, as the men wear the black felt reservation hat, through the hottest days of summer) pinned with a large silver and coral brooch, and white leather moccasins. Lena came with the baby from the kitchen space to introduce us. Her mother had almost no English but her manner was extremely gracious, and the boy, whose name was Shane, seemed friendly. She sat on the center cushion of the sofa, Lena taking a place to her right and Shane to her left, and crooned to her grandson while she stroked his head. The Navajo language is considered almost impossibly difficult for outsiders to master; during World War II American intelligence used Navajos speaking in their native tongue as an alternative to code language. It is also supposed to be unpleasant to listen to, but as spoken by Lena and her mother it sounded soft and sibilant. George attempted to learn Navajo after he and Lena were married, but she always ended by laughing at him and after a time he quit trying. The boy Shane leaned across his mother to speak to the baby, also addressing him in Navajo. He had been grinning all the time, displaying his strong white teeth more broadly until his dark Mongolian eyes almost disappeared behind his round cheeks. He had on a black T-shirt with the legend "We are the Overlords" printed across the back, and from under the black beanie cap his black glossy hair fanned across his shoulders. Lena's mother had nine children, the youngest of whom was ten years old while five were already married. She owned a house in the government development at Red Lake, in addition to the ranch at White Mesa where Shane had spent the past nine days herding sheep and sleeping out on a high wooden scaffold to be away from snakes. George slapped him on the leg. "Good for you, Dude," he said. "Looking after sheep is a big responsibility." Shane gave me a sideways look, still grinning. Then he stretched his long legs on the carpet, pulled the bill of his cap over his eyes, and leaned back in the cushions. "It's boring, man," he said above folded arms. "Nine days without seeing nobody, without nobody to talk to, without no shower." He pushed the cap back from his eyes again and went on grinning at me.

"It doesn't sound boring to me." George bent to lace his boots. "As a matter of fact, we're getting ready to go climbing on White Mesa right now." Lena was carefully tying Christopher onto the cradleboard of a type used by Navajo mothers since the tribe's nomadic days some hundreds of years ago. "Why don't you guys take him with you?" she asked, glancing at her brother. "I think he could probably do with a change."

We stopped at the Yah-Ta-Ay, where bland impassive faces stared through the stranger and floated past him with as little human recognition as if he were invisible, for the mail, beer, and soft drinks. It was stocked to please a Westchester housewife, and the video shop crowded with adolescent Navajos in bolagaana dress picking through the latest Hollywood films. Then we drove on to the landfill where George deposited a bag of trash and Shane called my attention to Avon Lady, a very old woman seated in a folding chair and huddled under blankets in the hot sun while she sniffed fingernail polish from a discarded bottle. Around her a man scavenged in a painstaking way from one pile of garbage to another; Shane said he was looking for copper to trade for liquor at the bootlegger's. Trash blew out of the dump, across the road, and into the desert beyond it. George said that Tuba City had been a very clean place before it started to grow, but that nobody wanted to take the time anymore to fill in over the garbage. "It's interesting that people who consider the land to be sacred should be guilty of trashing it this way, but it's a real problem here."

Shane sat with his knees drawn up on the foldaway seat in the back of the Datsun pickup's cramped cab as we drove north on Highway 160 toward Red Lake. The morning was clear and warm, but filled with the same hard wind driving unremittingly from the west. Ahead the tilted bulk of Black Mesa lifted away to the northeast, while in the northwest White Mesa gradually clarified itself in the dusty desert light. Old women shrouded in their long skirts and heavy blouses herded sheep on foot and on noisy fourwheelers; a hundred yards from the highway men wearing black hats and sunglasses struggled to raise a canvas tent on the booming wind beside a sign handlettered with the words REVIVAL MEETING. George drove very fast on the shoulder of the washboarded reservation road, the truck canted at an angle of nearly 15 degrees and towing a long parachute of pale bentonite dust. As we approached White Mesa he called my attention to the great buttressing arch outstanding from the cliff. Lena, who grew up out here, had been taught as a girl to avoid arches. She is of the last generation to have been raised in the traditional Navajo life, including its rituals and beliefs: without television, telephone, or radio; barefoot, lacking motorized transport and store-bought groceries with the exception of a few canned goods. "Everybody was poor," George said, "nobody knew what poverty was—nobody had so much as heard the word. Of course, there was always some guy around with 4,000 head of sheep, but then, next to him there was you, and everybody else." He turned abruptly from the clay road into a dusty trail running straight at the mesa, twisting among the juniper trees before it began to climb the chalky walls where cliff swallows swooped and darted into a sky that appeared purple at the zenith.

The juniper forest crowded the road, the dark boughs brushing the truck with an odorous rub, and presently clearings appeared in it where people from the summer hogans had been cutting firewood. When George could maneuver no farther he halted at the crest of a steep sand dune and set the hand brake. "Wait until you see *this*," he said. His voice was almost a whisper. In silence we unfolded ourselves from the truck, drank from the water bottles, shouldered the packs, and walked off in deep sand among the stunted, twisted trees. c

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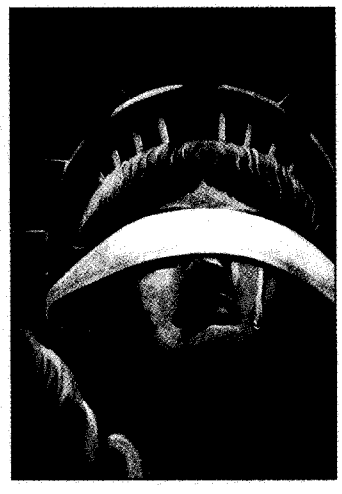

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